











Studies  
and  
Further Studies  
in a  
**DYING CULTURE**

by  
Christopher Caudwell

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## STUDIES IN A DYING CULTURE

*by the same author*  
ILLUSION AND REALITY

THE CRISIS IN PHYSICS  
*with an Introduction by*  
*Prof. H. Levy*

COLLECTED POEMS

# STUDIES IN A DYING CULTURE

CHRISTOPHER CAUDWELL

*with an introduction by*

JOHN STRACHEY

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## INTRODUCTION

**Y**OU know how I feel about the importance of democratic freedom. The Spanish People's Army needs help badly; their struggle, if they fail, will certainly be ours to-morrow, and, believing as I do, it seems clear where my duty lies.'

The author of this book gave the above explanation for enlisting in the British Battalion of the International Brigade, which he did on December 11th, 1936.

On February 12th, 1937, he was holding a hill above the Jarama River, as one of a machine-gun section under the command of a Dalston busman. That afternoon he was killed.

' . . . What I feel about the importance of democratic freedom.' Now Caudwell was a Communist. And many people sincerely suppose that Communists are the dangerous enemies of democratic freedom; they believe that if Communists declare their attachment to democracy, or to freedom, they are only doing so in order to deceive. Yet here we have a Communist, not merely declaring his attachment to democracy and freedom; not merely declaring, as Mr. Neville Chamberlain has recently done, for example, his readiness to die in defence of democracy, but, in actual fact, dying for democracy.

Surely there is something to puzzle over here? Do

men fight and die for a political manœuvre? Do they face the Fascist assault; do they face the onrush of the new barbarism armed with every device of infernal science; do they face that charge, made by war-maddened Moorish Tribesmen, supported by the perfected products of German and Italian aviation which killed Caudwell; do they leave home to face all that, for the sake of a democratic freedom in which they do not really believe?<sup>1</sup> And yet Caudwell was a Communist; a Communist who died for democratic freedom.

The Elizabethans said that death was eloquent. Perhaps the death of Caudwell, and of the men from London and Glasgow and Middlesbrough and Cardiff who have died with him in Spain, may so speak that

<sup>1</sup> Here is an extract from an eye-witness account of his death:

'On the first day Sprigg's' (Caudwell was a literary pseudonym) 'section was holding a position on a hill-crest. They got it rather badly from all ways, first artillery, then machine-gunned by aeroplanes, and then by ground machine-guns. The Moors then attacked the hill in large numbers and as there were only a few of our fellows left, including Sprigg, who had been doing great work with his machine-gun, the company commander, —, the Dalston busman, gave the order to retire.

'Later I got into touch with one of the section who had been wounded while retiring, and he told me that the last they saw of Sprigg was that he was covering their retreat with the advancing Moors less than thirty yards away. He never left that hill alive, and if any man ever sacrificed his life that his comrades might live, that man was Sprigg.'

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the people of Britain will begin to understand why Communists fight and die for democratic freedom ; for it seems that nothing less than the indubitable signature of death will make men believe in their sincerity.

Caudwell, however, did more than die for his beliefs. For twenty-nine years he lived for them. And into these years he packed a remarkable amount of activity. He wrote a quite startling number of books. For instance, he wrote, under his real name of Christopher St. John Sprigg, no less than seven detective stories (I have read one of them and thought it very poor, as a matter of fact), five books on aviation, and a great number of short stories and poems.

And these were merely his pot-boilers. For the work he really cared about he reserved the pseudonym of Caudwell. Above this name he wrote a serious novel called *This My Hand* (which, in my view, is a failure) and three major works, namely, *Illusion and Reality*, *The Crisis in Physics* and the present volume.

We catch the impression of a young man possessed by creative energy ; a young man turning out a flood of work, good, bad and indifferent ; a young man, however, marked with one of the most characteristic and one of the rarest of the signs of promise, namely, real copiousness. He was a young man who not only warmed his hands before, but gave great hearty pokes at, the fire of life ; a young man so interested in everything, from aviation, to poetry, to

detective stories, to quantum mechanics, to Hegel's philosophy, to love, to psycho-analysis, that he felt that he had simply got to say something about them all.

That is what a man in his 'twenties ought to be like. It is true that such a man isn't very likely to say anything conclusive about aviation, love or quantum mechanics.<sup>1</sup> When such a man is about thirty years old, however, his omnivorous attention will settle upon the intensive study of one, or perhaps two, chosen fields ; and it will be incomparably the richer for its wandering decade.

Caudwell was just twenty-nine, he was finding himself ; his last books show a sharp gain in precision, in capacity to focus ; and then the Moors came.

It is not my purpose to say anything of his two other considerable works, *Illusion and Reality* and *The Crisis in Physics*. The single purpose of this introduction is to proclaim the unity between the theme which runs through every one of the eight studies of this book and the cause for which its author died ; to proclaim the exquisite unity between Caudwell's theory and his practice ; the unity which is, I suppose, what people mean when they talk about sincerity.

For this book is about Liberty. It is a sustained, complex, elaborate, vehement attempt to explain what liberty is, why Communists fight and die for it, and

<sup>1</sup> The extraordinary thing is that Professor Levy says that Caudwell did say some extremely significant things about physics.

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why they know that in the final analysis Communism is Liberty.

The book takes the form of a number of essays on such contemporary figures as Shaw, T. E. Lawrence, D. H. Lawrence, Wells and Freud, with a paper on pacifism, and another on love, and a summing up on liberty itself, thrown in. Such a diversity of subjects might be expected to make the book scrappy and disconnected ; but it has not done so. Almost every page is knit together by a central and never forgotten theme, namely, the analysis, from every angle, of the concept of human liberty. The method which Caudwell chose, that of exemplifying his theme by studies of some of the more influential contemporary minds, makes the book rich and concrete where it might easily have become meagre and abstract.

Caudwell's introductory chapter gives out his theme. By universal admission something is wrong with contemporary culture. In spite of the enormous achievements of twentieth-century science, everyone feels that the whole vast body of culture, of which science, art, religion, and philosophy are component parts, is rotting. Yet, no one can diagnose the disease.

‘What is the explanation?’ Caudwell writes :

‘Either the Devil has come amongst us having great power, or there is a causal explanation for a disease common to economics, science and art. Why then have not all the psycho-analysts, Eddingtons, Keynes, Spenglers, and bishops who have surveyed the scene,

been able to locate a source of infection common to all modern culture, and, therefore, surely obvious enough? For answer, these people must take to themselves the words of Herzen: "We are not the doctors, we are the disease."

Caudwell's answer is given by the whole of the rest of his book, but he attempts to sum it up both in the introductory chapter and in his last essay on liberty. His answer is that the men of to-day, the men who determine the mental climate of our epoch, have profoundly mistaken the nature of human liberty. As the achievement of liberty is, explicitly or implicitly, the universal goal for which all men work, a mistake about the very nature of liberty vitiates all our endeavours from the very outset. In a few sentences (but to state the idea in a few sentences is to mutilate and to impoverish it) the leaders of contemporary culture are still dominated, whether they know it or not, with the Rousseauesque belief that man was born free but has enslaved himself in a net of social relations; that the freest man is the most isolated; that what we have to do in order to regain the liberty of the 'natural man' is to unloose all the coercions and ties of society; to dissolve the community into its original elements again.

Caudwell's theme, to which he returns again and again, is that this conception is the prime error which is at the root of all our confusions. This wholly negative conception of liberty had its justification when

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the task before mankind was the striking off of feudal fetters, the dissolution of a rigid outworn system of social relations within which the powers of mankind were cabined. Then it was true, relatively and temporally, that the dissolution of an obsolete set of social relations, by which men consciously dominated each other, was the task of the liberator. To-day this old truth has died and its corpse has become the most pestilence-breeding of errors.

It is not that we do not still need to seek liberty as the highest of all human ends.

‘There are many essays of Bertrand Russell,’ Caudwell writes, ‘in which this philosopher explains the importance of liberty, how the enjoyment of liberty is the highest and most important goal of man. Fisher claims that the history of Europe during the last two or three centuries is simply the struggle for liberty. Continually and variously, by artists, scientists, and philosophers alike, liberty is thus praised and man’s right to enjoy it imperiously asserted.’

‘I agree with this. Liberty does seem to me the most important of all generalised goods—such as justice, beauty, truth—that come so easily to our lips.’

But the achievement of liberty to-day depends on a process opposite to that undertaken by the anti-feudal liberators. It is not a question to-day of dissolving conscious, overt, feudal bonds by which one man, or class of men, is dominating another. The task of the

twentieth-century liberator is, on the contrary, a treble one.

First his analytic task is to make conscious the contemporary, unconscious, unseen social bonds and compulsions which have grown up in the society which resulted from the work of the men, and the class, which destroyed feudalism. This side of the twentieth-century liberators' task is to make men conscious of the fact that when they, rightly, destroyed the overt feudal bond of serf to lord, and slave to slave-owner, they, all unknowingly, wove new, subtle, invisible bonds of domination. Of these the bond between the employer and the employee is the type; and these bonds have become, for all their intangibility, more cruel and coercive in many respects, than the old, overt bonds of servitude.

This tragic result was inevitable because of a profound though, perhaps, historically necessary contradiction in the conception of the goal towards which the anti-feudal—the liberal—liberators were working. Because they thought that the freest man was the most isolated; because, as Caudwell points out, the beast of the jungle is the ultimate ideal of freedom for the liberal who has taken liberalism to its ultimate conclusion; because they did not see that when they destroyed the putrescent connective tissue of the feudal body politic, they must perforce evolve some new social connective tissue to take its place, they neglected the whole constructive side of their task.

But their omission did not mean that new social



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relations were not established. That would have been impossible ; that would have meant the dissolution of human society. It simply meant that the new, post-feudal, social relations, under which we still live, were established unconsciously. These are the social relations of capitalism, the social relations of the market. Every man is now free, none has legal, compulsive powers over any other. Society is composed of free atoms.

But how are these human atoms to meet at all ? How are men to organise any form of co-operation for associated labour ? How are social interconnections of any kind to be achieved ? The answer is that new and tighter, though now unconscious and invisible, bonds have grown up behind men's backs out of those commercial relations of buying and selling which were the one form of social intercourse allowed in the theory of post-feudal society. This single relation of buying and selling, by turning into the relation of buying and selling men's power to labour, has become the compulsive relation of employer to employee ; it has become an acute form of domination. In modern society almost the only relation of which men are conscious is their relation to the commodities which they buy and sell. But behind this relation to things has lain concealed a social relation ; a relation of domination to other men. To make all this conscious ; to make men realise that they live in a highly, though invisibly, intergraded society, is the first, analytic step of the work of the modern liberator.

The second step is to make men realise that all that is good in capitalist society ; that everything in which it shows its superiority to feudal society, arises, by a supreme historical paradox, from the higher degree of integration, the richer growth of social connective tissue, which the new form of society has unconsciously produced ; that everything which is bad in capitalist society ; the subservience of man to man ; the extreme and ever-growing instability of the whole system ; its slumps and its wars, and its present disintegration, arises because of the unconscious and, therefore, uncontrolled and uncomprehended nature of these new, close and dominating social relations.

The third and highest task of the contemporary liberator is to make men realise that they will find liberty, first, by breaking down, it is true, the existing, unconscious, set of social relations and coercions. But then, if they are to be free, they must build up new, conscious, rich, close and complex social relations ; they must build up those social relations which we call socialism. Somehow we must make men understand that they can find liberty, not in the jungle, which is the most miserably coercive place in the world, but in the highest possible degree of social co-operation. Liberty is a positive and not a negative concept ; liberty is the presence of opportunity rather than the absence of constraint ; liberty is the ability to do what we want. And that we cannot do, upon this obstinate earth, except in close, conscious and organised co-operation with our fellow-men.

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These few sentences maim and constrict Caudwell's exposition of the concept of liberty as a positive social relation ; the concept of liberty as the attainment of the highest degree of mutual aid. The reader of this book will find this concept diversely illustrated and illuminated in almost every one of its pages.

Again, it has been to misrepresent Caudwell's book to suggest that it is simply an essay on liberty. It is true that this theme runs through it ; that this theme is what gives it unity and singleness of purpose. But there are many other suggestive and stimulating themes in the book. Caudwell makes a real contribution, for example, to the study of Freudian psychology as a social phenomenon. Again he has some amusing and shrewd things to say about Wells and Shaw.

Indeed the particular essay which interested me most was that on T. E. Lawrence. In it, Caudwell develops what I can only call a theory of heroism. He asks the question, what is a hero ? Why did the huge convulsion of the world war produce no hero in that part of the world which stayed within the confines of capitalist society ? Why does Lenin, the man who burst those confines for one great people, alone stand out to save our epoch from incomparable mediocrity ? He answers this question by a study of the nearest thing to a hero which the British ruling class was able to produce, the hero *manqué*, T. E. Lawrence.

There is profound understanding and sympathy in

Caudwell's study of this supremely original, supremely unhappy, genius. This essay, above all perhaps, makes us feel how profound has been our loss through the death of Caudwell. In this essay Caudwell shows a capacity which is as yet tragically rare amongst the writers, and leaders, of the British working-class movement. He shows a width of perception, a generosity of sympathy, a capacity to understand the motive forces which move the minds of men. He shows an ability to use his Marxian insight into impersonal social forces in order to gain an understanding of the tragedies of individual men.

Well, because we were too lazy, too selfish, too frightened to see to it that our country played its part in preventing the world from becoming the playground of the Fascist aggressors, Caudwell has been killed ; and many another such, who might have lived to bless the world, will be killed. Let us, at least, use the words which Caudwell did have the opportunity to leave us, to make all those who are becoming men and women in the blood-stained nineteen-thirties understand for what it was he died.

JOHN STRACHEY.

## FOREWORD

*'We are living in a very singular moment of history. It is a moment of crisis, in the literal sense of that word. In every branch of our spiritual and material civilisation we seem to have arrived at a critical turning-point. This spirit shows itself not only in the actual state of public affairs but also in the general attitude towards fundamental values in personal and social life.'*

*'... Formerly it was only religion, especially in its doctrinal and moral systems, that was the object of sceptical attack. Then the iconoclast began to shatter the ideals and principles that had hitherto been accepted in the province of art. Now he has invaded the temple of science. There is scarcely a scientific axiom that is not nowadays denied by somebody.' And at the same time almost any nonsensical theory that may be put forward in the name of science would be almost sure to find believers and disciples somewhere or other.'*

MAX PLANCK : 'WHERE IS SCIENCE GOING ?' 1933.

AS the above quotation shows, one does not have to be a Marxist to declare that bourgeois culture is seriously ill. In art, science, religion, economics and ethics, there is dissension, and a thousand confessions of bewilderment and pessimism could be drawn from the writings of the acknowledged leaders of contemporary culture from Einstein to Freud. All the

old easy confidence of a century ago has evaporated. The only consolation religion has is that science disavows causality; and scientists draw comfort from the fact that 'practical' men are unable to run the ship of state anywhere but on the rocks.

Yet bourgeois culture during the last fifty years has achieved much. Its empirical developments include relativity and quantum physics, genetics, a new insight into the deeper layers of man's mind, the different patterns of social relationships uncovered by anthropology, and hundreds of technicollogical inventions such as the aeroplane, wireless, motor transport, and electric power. Why, with this proved record, does it despair?

It despairs because each discovery is like a Midas touch, which prepares a new disappointment. Quantum physics appears to have withdrawn reality from the domain of science by denying causality. The psychological discoveries have produced a hopeless confusion in which hundreds of radically different psychological schools struggle for leadership. Bourgeois anthropology claims to have shown that the stability of societies rests on illusion. But modern man has no illusions—or believes he has none. And the unparalleled increase in productive powers has given birth, not to peace, plenty, and happiness, but to war, famine, and misery. Anarchy is the keynote of the crisis in all spheres. The crisis has this characteristic of anarchy, that though all men will one thing to be the result of their efforts, what is brought about

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by them is precisely the opposite. And it has this further characteristic of anarchy, that the more men wish to gain a common truth, a common faith, a common world-view, the more their efforts at ideological construction increase the sum of contradictory and partial views of reality.

What is the explanation? Either the Devil has come amongst us having great power, or there is a causal explanation for a disease common to economics, science, and art. Why then have not all the psychoanalysts, Eddingtons, Keynes, Spenglers, and bishops who have surveyed the scene, been able to locate a source of infection common to all modern culture, and, therefore, surely obvious enough? For answer, these people must take to themselves the words of Herzen: 'We are not the doctors, we are the disease.'

The Marxist's first task is to separate, from this confusion, the elements that represent real empirical discoveries, and fit them into his synthetic world-view. This is comparatively easy. More laborious is the analysis of the cause which, in each discovery, makes it go bad, so to speak, upon the inventor's hands. Why does this strange doom hang over bourgeois culture, that its progress seems only to hasten its decay? And how can one cause operate in so many different fields, and bring about so many different forms of decay and confusion?

These Studies are concerned with both tasks, synthetic and analytic, but the second is regarded as at this stage more important and valuable. Some of

them may seem unduly critical in tone for a work with the quoted words of Lenin at its forefront. But the critical approach to bourgeois culture has this value, that it is always the application of the same method. In art, philosophy, physics, psychology, history, sociology, and biology the 'crisis' of bourgeois culture is always due to the same cause. And this is no accident, because that destructive illness was originally the dynamic force of bourgeois civilisation ; but now, its utmost potentialities accomplished, it is a power for ill. Worn-out engines become brakes. Outworn truths become illusions. Bourgeois culture is dying of a myth.

But it will be said, bourgeois culture is suffering not from illusion but from disillusionment. Everyone has said it—Freud, Jung, D. H. Lawrence, and the Archbishop of Canterbury. Precisely, for this is the very danger of its illusion, that it believes itself disillusioned. It has shed all the secondary illusions—of religion, God, morality, democracy, teleology, and metaphysics. But it cannot rid itself of the basic bourgeois illusion, and because it is unaware of this illusion, and because this illusion is now stripped to its naked essence, it violently distorts the whole fabric of contemporary ideology.

This illusion is that man is naturally free—'naturally' in this sense, that all the organisations of society are held to limit and cripple his free instincts, and furnish restraints which he must endure and minimise as best he may. From which it follows that man is at his



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best and noblest when freely working out his own desires.

This illusion is of course the Renaissance charter of the *bourgeoisie*. It claimed for the 'natural man' freedom from all feudal restrictions, privileges, and monopolies. The basic relation of society was to be freedom from any relation—the free merchant, the free labourer, and free capital. With each man thus freely following his desires, the best interests of society as a whole would, it was asserted, be served. This principle, superior to the feudal principle, made the bourgeois class supreme and dynamic and, for a time, gave this principle the sanction of eternal truth. And it is still the assumption on which bourgeois culture is based.

If it were true, all would be well. It would be fine if freedom were as easy as this, that man was naturally free. But it is not true. Freedom is the product, not of the instincts, but of social relations themselves. Freedom is secreted in the relation of man to man. This demand of bourgeois culture was in fact unrealisable. Man cannot strip himself of his social relations and remain man. But he can shut his eyes to these social relations. He can disguise them as relations to commodities, to the impersonal market, to cash, to capital, and his relations then seem to have become possessive. He 'owns' the commodities, the cash and the capital. All his social relations appear to have become relations to a thing, and because man is superior to a thing, he is now free, he is dominating. But this is an illusion. By shutting his eyes to all the

relations between men that constitute society, and are its real stuff and substance, man has enslaved himself to forces whose control is now beyond him, because he does not acknowledge their existence. He is at the mercy of the market, the movement of capital, and the slump and boom. He is deluded by himself. This is shown by the remorseless test of events.

This bourgeois freedom of each man struggling for his free desires and his own profit, so far from making us free, has long delivered us over, bound to chance. Blind Fate, in the shapes of war, unemployment, slumps, despair and neurosis, attacks the 'free' bourgeois and his 'free' followers. His struggles put him into the power of finance capital, trustify him, or, if he is a 'free' labourer, he is herded into the mass-production factory. So far from being free, he is whirled like a leaf on the gales of social change. And all this anarchy, and impotence, and muddled dissension is reflected in his culture. Productive forces have outgrown the free bourgeois, and mercilessly crush him and his illusions.

Can such a simple error, if it be an error, infect the cool realms of physics, the remote spheres of art, and the inner world of psychology? Can it distort philosophy and hold back the hero from success? How can it appear everywhere in ideology, always as the distorting factor, without being observed as such? But it is just because it appears everywhere in his ideology, like the Fitzgerald contraction, in measurements of ether velocity, that it cannot be observed

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by the bourgeois, any more than the physicist can observe the earth's speed through the ether.

These 'Studies in a Dying Culture' are varied though their subjects may be united by the one theme. This theme is the lie at the heart of contemporary culture, the lie which is killing it; and deeper still is found the truth which is the complement to this lie, the truth which will transform and ~~re~~vitalise culture.



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# I

## GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

### A STUDY OF THE BOURGEOIS SUPERMAN

*'A good man fallen among Fabians.'* LENIN

SHAW in his life acquired general recognition among the ordinary members of the 'middle class' both here and in America, as representative of Socialist thought. The case of Shaw is in many ways interesting and significant; is a proof of how stubborn is the bourgeois illusion. The bourgeois may be familiar with Marxism and keenly critical of the social system, and anxious to change it, and yet all this leads only to an ineffectual beating of the air because he believes that man is in himself free.

Shaw is an ex-anarchist, a vegetarian, a Fabian, and, of late years, a Social Fascist: he is inevitably an *Utopian* socialist. His idea of Utopia was expounded in *Back to Methuselah*, a paradise of Ancients who spend their days in *thought* and despise the butterfly young who engage in the *active* work of artistic creation and science.

Shaw then exposed the weakness as well as the essence of his characteristically bourgeois brand of

socialism. It represents the primacy of pure contemplation. In pure contemplation man is alone, is apparently exempt from co-operation, is wrapped in a private world ; and he is then believed, by bourgeois thought, to be wholly free. Is not this the illusion of the scientist ? No, for science is not *pure* thought, it is thought allied to action, testing all its cogitations at the bar of reality. It is thought as thought ought to be, passing always in dialectic movement between knowing and being, between dream and outer reality. Shaw abhors this kind of thought. He abhors modern science not as he might do for its human weaknesses, but hating it for its essence, for its social qualities, for all that is good in its active creative rôle.

This is a familiar spectacle : the intellectual attempting to dominate hostile reality by 'pure' thought. It is a human weakness to believe that by retiring into his imagination man can elicit categories or magical spells which will enable him to subjugate reality contemplatively. It is the error of the 'theoretical' man, of the prophet, of the mystic, of the metaphysician, in its pathological form the error of the neurotic. It is the trace of the primitive believer in magic that remains in us all. In Shaw it takes a characteristically bourgeois form. He sees that truth brings freedom, but he refuses to see that this understanding is a social product and not a thing that one clever man can find alone. Shaw still believes that out of his Platonic soul man can extract pure wisdom in the form of world-dominating Ideas, and out of debate and ratiocination,



without social action, beat out a new and higher consciousness.

It is notable that the real artist, like the real scientist, never makes this mistake. Both find themselves repeatedly pushed into contact with reality ; they desire and seek reality outside them.

Reality is a large, tough, and—as man gets to know it—increasingly complex substance. To know it requires the socially pooled labours of generations of men. So complex has science already grown that a man can only hope to grasp completely a small corner of it. The old dream of all-knowledge for one mind has vanished. Men must be content to co-operate by giving a few stitches in the vast tapestry, and even these few stitches may be as complex as the earlier large design of a Newton or a Darwin.

Now Shaw with his bourgeois individualism is impatient at the restriction science sets on the domination of reality by one acute intellect. Shaw cannot hope to master the apparatus of science, therefore he sweeps it all away as mumbo-jumbo. It is nonsense, Shaw says, that the sun is ninety million miles away from the earth. Natural Selection is preposterous. And so instead of these concepts reached with so much labour, Shaw puts forward ideas drawn purely from his desires like those of any Hindoo mystic theorising about the world. Sweeping aside all science as nonsense, he rewrites the history of reality in terms of a witch-doctor's 'life-force' and a jam-to-morrow God. Shavian cosmology is barbarous ; it is idealistic.

Shaw dominates this tough, distressing, gritty environment by the familiar neurotic method, by imposing on it a series of fictional delusions of a wish-fulfilment type. This is not because Shaw is foolish but precisely because he is possessed of a naturally acute intellect. Its very acuteness has given him a pride which makes him feel he ought to be able to dominate all knowledge without social aid, by pure cerebration. He will not recognise, except cursorily, the social nature of knowledge. So we get in his cosmology an effect like that of an exceptionally brilliant medicine man theorising about life. Since the average intellectual is still infected with similarly barbaric theorising, it is not surprising that he does not detect the essential crudity of all Shaw's philosophy. Bourgeois speaks to bourgeois.

It is barbarous to believe in action without thought, that is the Fascist heresy. But it is equally barbarous to believe in thought without action, the bourgeois intellectual heresy. Thought is immobilised—or rather races like a machine with nothing to bite on—once it is declutched from action, for thought is an aid to action. Thought guides action, but it learns *how* to guide *from* action. Being must historically and always proceed knowing, for knowing evolves as an extension of being.

Shaw's instinctive bourgeois belief in the primacy of lonely thought is of course evidenced not only in his ludicrous cosmology and repulsive Utopia, but also in his Butlerian biology, in which the various

animals decide whether they want long necks and so forth, and by concentrating their minds on this aim, succeed in growing them. Ludicrous as this Butlerian neo-Lamarckianism is, it has enormous emotional influence on the bourgeois mind. It appeals to it so powerfully that sober scientists, even while admitting that no atom of evidence can be found for this hypothesis and all kinds of evidence for the opposite standpoint, yet insist on giving it a provisional approval, because it seems so 'nice' to them. To a mind obsessed with bourgeois concepts of liberty and the autonomy of the individual mind, such a conception seems to promise a kind of substitute for the paradise which determinism denies him.

This would be unimportant if Shaw's Fabianism did not pervade all his work, robbing it of artistic as well as of political value. Believing in the solitary primacy of thought, all his plays are devoid of humanity, because they represent human beings as walking intellects. Fortunately they are not, or the human race would long ago have perished in some dream-fantasy of logic and metaphysics. Human beings are mountains of unconscious being, walking the old grooves of instinct and simple life, with a kind of occasional phosphorescence of consciousness at the summit. And this conscious phosphorescence derives its value and its power from the emotions, from the instincts ; only its form is derived from the intellectual shapes of thought. Age by age man strives to make this consciousness more intense, the artist by subtilising and

intensifying the emotions, the scientist by making fuller and more real the thought form, and in both cases this is done by burning more being in the thin flame. Shaw, however, is obsessed with the 'pure' flame, phosphorescence separate from being. The ideas thus abstracted become empty and petty and strike with a remote tinkling sound in the ears. Shaw's plays become an 'unearthly ballet of bloodless categories'.

This mixed thought and feeling of consciousness is not the source of social power, only a component of it. Society with its workshops, its buildings, its material solidity, is always present below real being and is a kind of vast reservoir of the unknown, unconscious and irrational in every man, so that of everyone we can say his conscious life is only a fitful gleam on the mass of his whole existence. Moreover, there is a kind of carapacious toughness about the conscious part of society which resists change, even while, below these generalisations, changes in material and technique and real detailed being are going on. This gives rise in every man to a tension which is a real dynamic force in society, producing artists, poets, prophets, madmen, neurotics and all the little uncertainties, irrationalities, impulses, sudden unreasoning emotions, all the delights and horrors, everything that makes life the thing it is, enrapturing the artist and terrifying the neurotic. It is the sum of the uneasy, the anti-conservative, the revolutionary. It is everything which cannot be content with the present but

causes lovers to tire of love, children to flee their happy parental circle, men to waste themselves in apparently useless effort.

This source of all happiness and woe is the disparity between man's being and man's consciousness, which drives on society and makes life vital. Now all this tension, everything below the dead intellectual sphere, is blotted out in Shaw. The Life Love, which is his crude theological substitute for this real active being, is itself intellectually conceived. Thus his characters are inhuman ; all their conflicts occur on the rational plane, and none of their conflicts are ever resolved—for how can logic ever resolve its eternal antimonies, which can only be synthesised in action ? This tension creates 'heroes' like Cæsar and Joan of Arc, who, in response to the unformulated guidance of experience, call into existence tremendous talent forces of whose nature they can know nothing, yet history itself seems to obey them. Such heroes are inconceivable to Shaw. He is bound to suppose that all they brought about they consciously willed. Hence these heroes appear to him as the neat little figures of a bourgeois history book, quite inhuman, and regarding their lives as calmly as if they were examination papers on the 'currents of social change'. These plays are not dramas. This is not art, it is mere debate and just as unresolved, just as lacking in tragic finality, temporal progress or artistic unity as is all debate.

For this reason, too, Shaw is a kind of intellectual aristocrat, and no one who is not capable of declaring

his motives rationally and with the utmost acuity on instant demand appears in his plays, except as a ludicrous or second-rate figure. The actors are nothing ; the thinkers are everything. Even a man who in real life would be powerful, formidable and quite brainless—the ‘armourer’ of ‘Major Barbara’—has to be transformed into a brilliant theoretician before (as Shaw thinks) he can be made impressive on the stage. But we all know and admire characters devoid of the ability for intellectual formulation who yet seem in their influence upon reality nobler, grander, more powerful and effective than any of our intellectual friends. We know well enough in life at all events, that thought alone does not suffice to drive on the world, and recognise this in our homage to ‘illusory’ ‘irrational’ art, art that speaks to the mere experience of us, stirring it into a fleeting and purely emotional consciousness? None of these characters, who in war, art, statesmanship and ethics have been of significance in the world’s history, appear in Shaw’s plays. He is incapable of drawing a character who is impressive without being a good arguer in bourgeois dialectic. This weakness naturally shows itself in his proletarians. Like the proletarians in the Army hostel of Major Barbara, they are simply caricatures. Only by being ‘educated’, like the chauffeur in *Man and Superman*, can they become respectable.

It therefore follows that Shaw’s ideal world is a world not of communism, but like Wells’ is a world ruled by intellectual Samurai guiding the poor muddled

workers ; a world of Fascism. For bourgeois intellectuals obsessed with a false notion of the nature of liberty are by the inherent contradictions of their notion at length driven to liberty's opposite, Fascism. Shaw's Utopia is a planned world imposed from above in which the organisation is in the hands of a bureaucracy of intellectuals. Such a world is negated by the world of communism, in which all participate in ruling and active intellectuals, no longer divorced from being, learn from the conscious worker just as much as the workers demand guidance from thought. The fatal class gap between thought and action is bridged. This world, with its replaceable officials not specially trained for the task, is the opposite of the old Fabian dream or nightmare, the class Utopia in which the ruling class now takes the form of a permanent, intellectual, trained bureaucracy, wielding the powers of State for the 'good' of the proletariat. This world was a pleasant dream of the middle class, which neither owned the world, like the capitalist, nor had the certainty of one day owning it like the proletariat. It is an unrealisable dream which yet holds the intellectual away from the proletariat and makes him a bulwark of reaction and Fascism. Shaw is still obsessed with the idea of liberty as a kind of medicine which a man of goodwill can impose on the 'ignorant' worker from without. That liberty would be medicine for the bourgeois, not the worker. He does not see that neither intellectual nor worker possesses as yet this priceless freedom to give, both are confined within

the categories of their time, and communism is the active creation of true liberty which cannot yet be given by anybody to anybody. It is a voyage of discovery, but we are certain of one thing. The liberty which the Roman, the feudal lord and the bourgeois achieved, proved illusory, simply because they believed that a ruling class could find it, and impose it on society. But we can see that they failed and man is still everywhere in chains, because they did not share the pursuit of liberty with their slaves, their serfs, or the exploited proletariat ; and they did not do so because to have done so would have been to cease to be a ruling class, a thing impossible until productive forces had developed to a stage where ruling classes were no longer necessary. Therefore, before the well-meaning intellectual, such as Shaw, seeks this difficult liberty, he must first help to change the system of social relations to one in which all men and not a class have the reins of society in their hands. To achieve liberty a man must govern himself ; but since he lives in society, and society lives by and in its productive relations, this means that for men to achieve liberty society must govern its productive relations. For a man to rule himself presupposes that society is not ruled by a class from which he himself is excluded. The search for liberty only begins in the classless state, when society, being completely self-governing, can learn the difficult ways of freedom. But how can this be achieved when its destiny is planned by a class, or controlled by the higgling of



a market, or even arranged by a company of elegant Samurai? How can the intellectual Samurai ever agree, since no two philosophers have ever agreed about absolute truth and justice? Only one referee has ever been found for the interminable *sic et mon* of thought—action. But in a world where thought rules and action must hold its tongue, how can the issue ever be resolved? Action permeates every pore of society : its life is the action of every man. Society is torn apart as soon as its form is determined by the thought of a few which is privileged and separate from the action of the many.

Since Shaw implicitly denies the elementary truth that thought flows from being, and that man changes his consciousness by changing his social relations, which change is the result of the pressure of real being below those relations. Shaw must necessarily deny the efficacy of revolutionary action as compared with the activities of propaganda. Like Wells he believes that preaching alone will move the world. But the world moves, and though it moves through and with preaching, it does not follow that all preaching moves it, but only that that preaching moves it which moves with the law of motion of the world, which marches along the line of action, and cuts down the grain of events. Yet a bourgeois intellectual always believes that whatever he conceives as absolute truth and justice—vegetarianism or equal incomes or anti-vaccination—can be imposed on the world by successful argument. Hence Shaw's plays.

But here Shaw is faced with a dilemma. He is to impose his absolute truths on the world by the process of logical debate. But the world of non-thinkers or half-thinkers on which he imposes it are necessarily an inferior race of creatures—the mere labourers, the nit-wit aggregation of the non-intellectuals, the plastic amorphous mass whom the intellectual lords of creation save from disaster by their god-like commands. How can one drill sense into these creatures? What will appeal to their infantile frivolous minds? One must of course treat them as one treats children, one must sugar the pill of reason with paradox, humour, with lively and preposterous incident.

Thus Shaw, whom a belief in the primacy of intellectual consciousness prevented from becoming an artist, was by this same belief prevented from becoming a serious thinker or a real force in contemporary consciousness. He became the world's buffoon; because his messages were always wrapped in the sugar of humour, they were taken as always laughable. The British bourgeois, who ignored Marx, vilified Lenin and threw its Tom Manns into prison, regarded Shaw with a tolerant good-humour as a kind of court jester. The people he had depreciated depreciated him. The sugar he put on his pill prevented the pill from acting.

Marx by contrast did not attempt to make *Das Kapital* appealing to the tired brains of the British bourgeoisie. He did not attempt to become a best-seller, or veil his views in West End successes. He

did not give humorous interviews to the contemporary press. His name was known only to a few Englishmen of his time, while that of Shaw is known to millions. But because he gave his message seriously, treating the race of men as his equals, his message was received seriously and well. Because he did not believe that thought rules the world, but that thought must follow the grain of action, his thought has been more world-creating than that of any single man. Not only has it called into existence a new civilisation over a sixth of the world's surface, but in all other countries all revolutionary elements are oriented round Marx's thought; all contemporary politics are of significance only in so far as they are with Marx or against him.

It is no answer to say that Marx's is a greater intellect than Shaw's. Doubtless if Shaw had been Marx he would have been Marx. No one has devised a standard for measuring intellects in themselves, since intellects do not exist in themselves, but only in their overt mentation. Shaw and Marx were both men of keen intellect, as evidenced in their writings, and both were aware, from experience, of the breakdown of greedy bourgeois social relations; but the mind of one was able to leap forward to the future, the other is prisoned always in the categories of the bourgeoisdom it despises. Because Shaw gave his message condescendingly and flippantly, treating the race of men as his inferiors, his message has been much read and little noted, and the message itself betrays all the

falsehood and unreality of the attitude which settled its delivery.

Shaw read Marx early in life, and he was given therefore the alternative of being a dangerous revolutionary instead of a popular reformist who would dream of a world saved by a converted middle-class. He decided that although Marx had shown him the shame and falsities of bourgeois life, he would refuse to recognise the necessity for the overthrow of this decaying class by the class of the future. From that moment Shaw was divided against himself.

This decision is explained by his personal history. Born into a middle-class family that had fallen from affluence and social position to embarrassment, the ambitious young Shaw, impressed from childhood with the necessity for retrieving the former Shavian status, came to London to gain success. Here he existed for a time by writing, as poor as any worker. But thanks to the possession of a dress-suit and a gift for playing on the piano, he was still able to mix in refined Kensington circles. Faced with proletarianisation, he clung to the bourgeois class. In the same way, faced with the problem of ideological proletarianisation in his reading of Marx, he resisted it, and adhered to Fabianism, with its bourgeois traditions and its social respectability.

This problem and his answer to it, decided his ideology and also his art. His knowledge of Marx enabled him to attack destructively all bourgeois institutions. But he was never able to give any answer to

the question : *What shall we do here and now to improve them besides talking ?* This problem, in the veiled form of 'tainted money', comes up in his work repeatedly—in *Widower's Houses*, *Major Barbara*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*—and always it is *patched up*. We must accept things as they are until the system is changed. But no immediate steps besides talking, are ever to be taken to change the system. Major Barbara, horrified at first by finding the Christ she believes in has sold out to capital, ends all the same by marrying the manager of the armament factory whose proprietor has bought Him. Shaw himself, who discovered the ruling class was rotten to the core, and built on the exploitation of the workers, yet ends by marrying ideologically money, respectability, fame, peaceful reformism and ultimately even Mussolini. He who takes no active steps to change the system, helps to maintain the system.

Yet just because Shaw has read Marx, he understands the essential contradictions of this solution. For this reason his plays are full of deliberately forced conversions, unconvincing *dénouements*, and a general escape from reality through the medium of fantasy and humour. Shaw dealt quite simply in his life with the problem of tainted goods that arose from the sufferings of animals. Meat and sera, one resulting from the slaughter and the other from the vivisection of animals, must not be used, even though in spite of one's abstention the wicked business goes merrily on. But he cannot make that renouncement in the case of

money and of all the intangibles of bourgeois respectability—fame as a Fabian intellectual instead of suppression as a dangerous revolutionary. Meat and sera are not essential to the life of society, and therefore it is possible to abstain from them. In bourgeois society money is what holds society together: no one can ever eat without it; therefore it is impossible to ‘abstain’ from it. But this in itself exposes the futility of Shaw’s bourgeois abstaining approach to the problem, like that of the pacifist who will not fight but continues to be fed at the expense of the community. Shaw’s ambivalent attitude to social evils reveals his cowardice before the prime evil, the very hinge of society, which he will accept, while he abstains from the lesser evils. Thus his vegetarianism acts as a kind of compensation for his betrayal on the larger issue, and a symbol of his whole reformist approach. He will abstain; he will criticise; but he will not act. This last refusal infects his criticism and makes his abstention an active weapon of reaction. And so, all through his plays and prefaces, money is the god, without which we are nothing, are powerless and helpless. ‘Get money, and you can be virtuous; without it you cannot even start to be good.’ Shaw repeats this so often and so loudly that he seems anxious to convince himself as well as others. ‘Renounce it,’ he asks, ‘and what help is your altruism? Even if you throw it in the gutter, some scoundrel will pick it up. Wait till the system is changed.’

But how is it to be changed? Shaw has no con-

vincing answer. There is no need to accuse Shaw of conscious dishonesty. Shaw is helplessly imprisoned in the categories of bourgeois thought. He could not see, that because being conditions knowing, the bourgeois class for all their 'cleverness' are doomed to collapse and the workers for all their 'stupidity' are able to play an active creative rôle in building a new civilisation on the wreckage of the old. Faced with this choice—*worker or bourgeois*—the bourgeois—with all the brilliance of bourgeois culture behind him—seemed to Shaw preferable to the other, ignorant, 'irrational' and 'brutalised' by poverty. Hence arose his life problem, how to persuade this bourgeois class to renounce its sins. He had to convert them, or fold his hands in despair; and yet in his heart he did not believe in their future, for he had read Marx.

This decision, conditioned by his class and his experience, led to all his difficulties. He could never really bring himself to believe in a bourgeois class regenerated by Fabianism, and events made still clearer its hopelessness and its decay. Hence, more and more, his plays become futile and unresolved. Civilisation is driven 'On the Rocks' or is in the 'Apple Cart'. Relief is found in the faith of a Life Force making inevitably for a Utopia (*Back to Methuselah*). Or as in *St. Joan* he tries to comfort himself by turning to a period when this class he has committed himself to, this bourgeois class, played an active creative part: he draws *St. Joan* as the heroine and prophet of bourgeois individuality, amid a dying medievalism. In

*Heartbreak House* he records simply a Tchekovian detachment and disillusion. Evidently all Shaw's failing, all the things that prevented him from fulfilling the artistic and intellectual promise of his native gifts, arise in a most direct fashion from his fatal choice of the bourgeois class at a period of history when the choice was wrong. From this choice springs the unreality of his plays, their lack of dramatic resolutions, the substitution of debate for dialectic, the belief in life forces and thought Utopias, the bungling treatment of human beings in love, the lack of scientific knowledge, and the queer strain of mountebank in all Shaw says, as of a man who in mocking others is also mocking himself because he despises himself but despises others more.

Shaw performed a useful function in exposing the weakness of the bourgeois class. He exposes the rottenness of its culture and at the same time commits the future to its hands, but neither he nor his readers can believe in the success of that ; and so he represents symbolically bourgeois intelligence as it is to-day, shamefaced and losing confidence in itself. He plays this active part, that he is one of the forces of defeatism and despair which help the decay of a world that has had its day. This disintegration is no more than pathological without the active forces of revolution which can shatter the rotten structure and build it anew. This confidence Shaw has never achieved, nor the insight that is needed for it. He stands by the side of Wells, Lawrence, Proust, Huxley, Russell,



Forster, Wassermann, Hemingway, and Galsworthy as typical of their age, men who proclaim the disillusionment of bourgeois culture with itself, men themselves disillusioned and yet not able to wish for anything better or gain any closer grasp of this bourgeois culture whose pursuit of liberty and individualism led men into the mire. Always it is their freedom they are defending. This makes them pathetic rather than tragic figures, for they are helpless, not because of overwhelming circumstances but because of their own illusion.

## II

### T. E. LAWRENCE

#### A STUDY IN HEROISM

ALTHOUGH the leading powers of the world directed during the four years of the Great War all their material, scientific, and emotional resources to violent action, this unprecedented struggle produced no bourgeois master of action. The Great War had no hero. On the other hand, the Russian Revolution was guided from the start by Lenin, who has since grown steadily in significance, not only in Soviet Russia, but throughout the bourgeois world. Wherever there is a social ferment, the actions and words of Lenin are part of it ; and each year makes clearer the fact that, as on a hinge, twentieth-century history turns on Lenin. Hindenburg, Ludendorff, Joffre, Jellicoe, French, Haig, Foch, Lloyd George, Wilson and Grey are figures which grow more and more ludicrous and petty as they recede down the tide of time. In the twentieth century millions of deaths and mountains of guns, tanks and ships are not enough to make a bourgeois hero. The best they achieved was a might-have-been, the pathetic figure of T. E. Lawrence.

Yet, if any culture produced heroes, it should surely be bourgeois culture? For the hero is an outstanding individual, and bourgeoisdom is the creed of individualism. The bourgeois age was inaugurated by a race of hero giants; the Elizabethan adventurers and New World conquistadors loom largely out of the rabble of history. The bourgeois progress gives us Cromwell, Marlborough, Luther, Queen Elizabeth, Wellington, Pitt, Napoleon, Gustavus Adolphus, George Washington. Indeed bourgeois history, for bourgeois schools, is simply the struggles of heroes with their antagonists and difficulties.

What is it that constitutes heroism? Personality? No; men with the flattest and simplest personalities have become heroes. Is it courage? A man can do no more than risk and perhaps lose his life, and millions did that in the Great War. Is it success—the utilisation of events to fulfil a purpose, something brilliant and dazzling in the execution, a kind of luring and forcing Fortune to obey one, as with that type of all heroes, Julius Cæsar? This is nearer the truth, but does not account for those heroes who were not successful. Thus Leonidas the heroic was overpowered by superior strategy. Nor does it account for men like Ludendorff or Rockefeller, possessed of resource, success, and brilliance, but very far from being heroes.

The truth seems to be that heroism is not something that can be defined from the quality of the hero's character alone. The circumstances make the hero. We do not advance Tolstoy's conception of the hero,

a man of petty stature borne on the tide of fortune. There must be something in the man. But there must also be something in events. The conception of the hero as the man dominating and moulding circumstances to his will is as false as that of him simply lifted to achievement as on a wave of the sea. Or rather both are partial aspects of the same truth, that of the freedom of man's will.

Man's will is free so far as it is consciously self-determined. His will at any moment is determined by the causal influences of his environment and his immediately preceding mental state, including in his mental state all those physiological factors that combine in the conscious and unconscious innervation patterns. A man is born with certain innate responses determined by his heredity, in a certain environment determined by the past. As he lives his life, innate responses and environment interact to form his consciousness, which is thus the result of a mutual tension between environment and instinct, begetting a continual development of the mind. Since all action involves an equal and opposite reaction, he in turn changes the environment during each transaction which changes him. His environment of course includes other human beings.

A hero is a man whose life is such that, his instinctive equipment being what it is, and his environment being what it is, the effect he has on his environment is much greater than the effect it has on him. We may, therefore, say that he is a man who dominates and moulds his environment.

But, just as a man can only carve a chicken properly if he knows where the joints are, and follows them, so a hero dominates events only because he conforms closely with the law that produces them. The man masterfully carving a chicken therefore corresponds also to the Tolstoyan conception of the hero as a man who is really a slave to circumstances. There is only one way of carving a chicken perfectly, and therefore the man who completely dominates the chicken by carving it perfectly is also completely dominated by it in that he has to follow its anatomy slavishly. But all the same it ends by being carved up. Even this makes the situation seem too simple. For there is also a cause in the dialectic of man's life why he wants to carve the chicken, why the hero wants to shake worlds.

Here we come to another characteristic of heroism, that the hero, even as he alters the world, seems unaware of what he is doing. Cæsar never consciously willed the Imperiate, nor Alexander the birth of Hellenistic culture. And yet they willed something, and all their actions seemed directed to the ends they brought about.

The hero seems to act with a kind of blind intuition ; and it is therefore particularly strange that the hero is master equally of matter and men, a thing foreign to the abilities of most great men. In this the hero fades on the one hand into the prophet or religious teacher, who can control men's souls but cannot control events, and on the other hand into the scientist, who can teach men how to control events if they wish, but

cannot teach them what to wish. The hero understands geography, war, politics, and cities, and new techniques are instrumental to him, but men are instrumental to him too. And with it all he hardly knows why it is so ; he could not give a causal explanation of what is to come about in the future in conformity with his present action, but it seems as if he knows in his heart what to do. A goddess, like Cæsar's divine patron and ancestor, Venus, seems to watch over his relations with men and events.

From whence does this gift spring ? What is its meaning ? Often the last thing the hero wishes to do is what he actually does. Like Cæsar he may be at heart a mere adventurer, and yet this knack of heroism ensures that in making his career he creates a civilisation, and irradiates his name with an almost divine lustre, while strenuous altruists are forgotten, or if remembered are remembered like the Inquisitors with execration. This quality of heroism is then independent of their motives, and yet it is a value, and must adhere to something.

It adheres to the social significance of their acts. Their desires arise from the movement of social relations, and the same movement is the force they wield, the magical power which seems to make the stars in their courses fight for them.

All crises, all wars, all perils or triumphs of States, all changes of social systems in which the hero manifests himself, represent the cracking of the carapace of social consciousness and all its organised formulations beneath

the internal pressure of changed social being. If social being were never to change, social consciousness, which bodies forth underlying social reality in terms of static symbols (words, thoughts, concepts, images, churches, laws), would always be adequate, and society would revolve like a gyroscope, stable and stationary. But in fact reality is never the same, for to say that it is the same means that time is at an end. Time is simply an unlikeness in events of a particular inclusive character, such that A is included by B, B by C, and so on. Becoming is intrinsic in reality which is therefore always cracking its skin, not gradually but like a snake, in seasons. The pressure rises until in a crisis the whole skin is cast. The superstructure of society is regrown.

At such times there is a tumult of action and thought, but since action precedes thought, the right thing must be done before the right thought can come into being. Social consciousness is not a mirror-image of social being. If it were, it would be useless, a mere fantasy. It is material, possessed of mass and inertia, composed of real things—philosophies, language habits, churches, judiciaries, police. If social consciousness were but a mirror-image, it could change like an image without the expenditure of energy when the object which it mirrored changed. But it is more than that. It is a functional superstructure which interacts with the foundations, each altering the other. There is a coming-and-going between them. So, life, arising from dead matter, turns back on it and changes it. The process

is evident in the simplest use of language. The word is social, representing existing conscious formulations. But to wish to speak, we wish to say something new, arising from our life experience, from our being. And, therefore, we use the Word, with a metaphor or in a sentence, in such a way that it has a slightly fresh significance nearer to our own new experience. This process on a vast scale produces revolutions, when men dissatisfied with the inherited social formulations of reality—governments, institutions and laws—wish to remake them nearer to their new and as yet unformulated experience. And because such institutions, unlike words, possess inertia, because the men with new experience represent one class, and the men without it clinging to the old formulations represent another class, the process is violent and energetic.

Man himself is composed like society of current active being and inherited conscious formulations. He is somatic and psychic, instinctive and conscious, and these opposites interpenetrate. He is formed, half rigid, in the shape of the culture he was born in, half fluid and new and insurgent, sucking reality through his instinctive roots. Thus he feels, right in the heart of him, this tension between being and thinking, between new being and old thought, a tension which will give rise by synthesis to new thought. He feels as if the deepest instinctive part of him and the most valuable is being dragged away from his consciousness by events. The incomplete future is dragging at him, but because instinctive components of the psyche are the oldest,



he often feels this to be the past dragging at him. That is why so often we come upon the paradox that the hero appeals to the past, and urges men to bring it into being again, and in doing so, produces the future. The return to the classics dominated the bourgeois Renaissance. Rome influenced Napoleon and the Revolution. The return to the natural uncorrupted man was the ideal of eighteenth-century revolutionaries. Yet it is the new whose tension men feel in their minds and hearts at such times. The new, implicit and in-formous, waits at the portals of man's consciousness. But it is invisible. It is as yet only a force, a tension, adequate to make of the things which generate that tension a new and synthesised reality, but at this stage no clearer than a force, a bodiless power. When he hears this signal, imperious in its call to action, the hero will as likely as not give it a formulation from the obscure past, since he cannot clothe it in the unknown qualities of the future. Coming as it does, not from the established habits of society and of his mind but from a pressure in the depths of both, this call to action seems to arise from the depths of man's soul. Therefore, he interprets it either as a personal devouring ambition (as indeed, in a sense it is) or as a call from God (as in another sense it is, for God always appears as a symbol of unconscious social relations). The mystic and the artist feel the same force, but they do not feel it as the hero does. To him it is a call to bring actively into the world this unknown thing, by shattering the material embodiments that oppose it or by creating

new forms to receive it. He may think it is the past he is born to save or re-establish on earth and only when it is done is it seen that the future has come into being. The reformer 'returning' to primitive Christianity brings bourgeois Protestantism into being ; and the adventurer raising himself by destroying senatorial power creates the Roman Imperiate.

Concerned chiefly with action, the hero reasons crudely, for action not reason is his task. His ideals are crude ; his aims perhaps personal, selfish, and mean. But we are not concerned with these. Watch his deeds. These express the force that is guiding him, and by these he conquers. Thus for all his irrationality he overcomes the more intellectual and enlightened spirits of his age. Wise and far-seeing men, perhaps, but they speak only the language of the present ; and are caught in the conscious formulations of their past. He speaks no known language, only a preposterous mixture of childhood memories and half-baked notions. But he acts a philosophy wiser than that professed by his academic opponents. Cicero goes down before Cæsar for Cæsar speaks the language of to-morrow, and Alexander with the intelligence and manners of a public school cad has yet advanced to the Hellenistic empire while Aristotle is wasting his pupils' time in investigating the constitutions of 158 obsolete city states. Although the hero's language is mixed and self-contradictory, his hearers are in no doubt as to what he refers. They too have heard that call to action from the heart of reality and have felt the growing tension in their

hearts. For its sake they are prepared to abandon consciousness ; for it is the consciousness of past obsolete experience. Reason—all the arguments based correctly on premises that have since changed—is powerless to silence this voice.

They believe they are turning from consciousness and reason to the voice of the heart and of the instincts. They believe they are abandoning the wretched present for the golden past. But in fact, as history always shows, they are abandoning present consciousness only to synthesise it in a wider consciousness and it is not to the golden past they turn, but the golden future. Hero and followers, leader and revolutionaries speak the same almost intuitive language, for they learn it from the same source. The hero may talk wildly or be dumb, may be ridiculous and contradictory, yet his audience knows to what he refers and how it cannot be expressed in words, only in action. From this arises the hero's masterful power over men. This power seems unconscious. Precisely because it is generated in reaching out, through action, to the consciousness of the new reality, it seems most true when least in the region of conscious formulation. The hero seems most successful when he follows blindly what he calls Luck or Inspiration or Divine Guidance, and what we as mystically call Intuition. That typical hero Cromwell explained this in his revealing comment to the French envoy Bellièvre :

‘ No one rises so high as he who knows not whither he is going.’

Every hero from Alexander to Napoleon might take this as his motto.

Yet the very source of this power outside the sphere of contemporary consciousness has its dangers. For the power, just because it does not consciously know its goal, may be wasted in a useless explosion. Because all men feel at such times, in the same vague and unformulated way the tension in society pressing for an outlet, they may be the prey of any charlatan who speaks a mystical language calling for change. The force will be tapped that could move mountains, but here the charlatan is as blind as they. For this is the difference between the charlatan and the hero. The charlatan has power over men but not over matter. He does not know the joints of the chicken of circumstance. He leads men back into abandoned ways and forgotten heresies.

For at such a time, because of the force that is being generated, there must be motion. The sum of things is tottering and man must go either backwards or forwards. Just as the neurotic goes back to a childhood solution, faced with impossible adult problems, so civilisation in times of stress such as we have pictured may move towards a previous solution, to some golden age of autocracy or feudalism which once was fertile. But the past can never be again. Just because the present has intervened, nothing can ever be as it once was. The fabric of society has become too changed and subtle to take up the old shape. Like the neurosis, social regression is no solution.

The charlatan appears at the same time as the hero, superficially like him, created by the same forces, and yet playing an opposite rôle. He is a Sulla, a Kerensky, a Hitler or a Mussolini. Hitler and Mussolini draw their power from the same source as Lenin drew his, from the tension between capitalist social relations and the growth in productive forces. And by the usual irony of revolutions, these charlatans appear at first as angels of construction and conservation and the hero seems the destructive element. Only later is it seen that their rôle is opposite, that the charlatans by wasting men's energy in vain regression are disintegrating all social relations, and that the hero by the very movement that sweeps the old forms off the stage brings into being the new.

Heroes are known not only by their power over men, which charlatans share, but over events, over external reality, over matter. Their intuition of the new social reality extends beyond a knowledge of the tension between the two and teaches them, not fully and clearly but enough for action, the path to be followed to give this tension a creative issue. Thus they move prophetically towards the future and act according to history, history in an unfair manner therefore seeming to play into their hands while all that the charlatans tried to build is swept away by time. The hero may die before he sees himself justified, but we say rightly, that his teaching lives on. He fought for things that survive him, and what can survive the present but the future? This was the world to which he belonged, and we who live in

it accord him the greeting of a fellow-citizen and all the admiration felt by a stay-at-home for a colonist.

Heroes are born with the aptitude perhaps, but are made by circumstances. And there is something peculiarly instructive as to the nature of heroes in the example of the bourgeois, Lawrence, dowered with all the hero's legendary gifts, called to action and yet through circumstances unable to answer the call. A man of unusual force of personality, intense ambition, and rare intellectual ability, Lawrence showed from his early years a strange restlessness. This restlessness of the hero is not unusual. It is as if from the beginning he feels in his heart the tension of the new social relations, but it is at first an appetite without an object. With Lawrence as with other heroes the splendid past was to engross that appetite and not merely in the form of his technical interest in archæology, but also as an attraction to the something large and vivid that there was in the ancient world, submerged in the tawdriness of modern conditions, so that he was driven to wander through the spacious deserts of the primitive East.

The nostalgia which afflicted him was plain enough. It was for ampler social relations, purged of the pettiness and commercialisation of capitalism. Every stage in his life derives its explanation only from this ruling need. As a kind of scholar gipsy he rubbed shoulders in his youth with all classes and conditions of the East. He found his nostalgia satisfied to the greatest degree by the free and open manners of the Bedouin. Their freedom and the value they attached to character and

leadership fascinated him, revolted as he was by a world in which value attached only to cash. His hatred of the bourgeois present and the call of the future were symbolised to him by a golden age, the spacious and simple vividness of the *Odyssey*. This noble life was not entirely dead, he found. In Arabia Deserta, a corner of the world as yet free from capitalist exploitation, this classic simplicity of society still lived on. True, he found that this desert culture could never fully sate the hunger that sent him on his travels. But he did not ask himself if after all the desires were what they clothed themselves in, whether it was in fact the past he hungered for. He explained it differently : they were Arabs and he was European ; they were simple and he was over-educated and sophisticated.

Then came the War, and with it the opportunity to give liberty to these people so precious to him because he saw in them all that he yearned for and could not find. And here Lawrence failed of the hero's grip on changing reality. Liberty—the word to him came simply with all the bourgeois conscious formulations he had absorbed at Oxford, and with it mingled the freedom he had experienced in the tents of the Bedouins, and the word seemed only an enlargement of the same gifts. He did not ask whether these liberties were the same, and if different, what bourgeois liberty really meant. Liberty was the gift he would give them. That was enough. He could act on that clear and classic issue.

So for a time he mastered men and events. He mastered men, because both he and the Arabs were in

love with social relations free from the money taint, open, frank, and equal. Theirs was the openness of the past, and what appealed to him was a frankness of the future ; but he did not know this, nor could he, there in Arabia Deserta. He, too, humbly twisted his ideals to theirs. His openness drew nothing from the future, but was crammed into an Arab dress, bloody, barbarous, without faith, and merciful only to those whose bread and salt it has shared. He cramped it into a liberty shared by a few men, savage and ignorant, disdainful of the rest of humanity. Here was something not without good because it was free and human ; but because of its limitations it was unworthy of a bourgeois hero nourished on Plato and Xenophon. It was still more unworthy of a hero who had felt in his heart the emptiness of bourgeoisdom and the call of a new world. He had desired to be just and friendly and brave and to hate pomp and ceremony and wealth, and to love the essence of a man simply as it realised itself in action. These values, lost to the bourgeois world, and only partially and primitively realised among the Bedouins, are the core of communist honour. But he crushed them into the mould of a desert Arab—he who had tasted all the philosophy and art of bourgeois Europe. He slew and plundered and was ruthless and contracted his aspirations to the narrow hopes of an Arab leader. Afterwards all this blood or wasted effort and vain tension were to reproach him like a murdered opportunity.

Why was he able to show this gift of the hero, to master in this limited sphere as well as men the march



of events ? Because he knew intuitively how stiff and indurated and obsolete capitalist social relations had become. The Conquistadors in the springtime of the bourgeoisie when these developing social relations seemed sweet and golden could conquer without help a whole New World. One handful of them could master a dead civilisation. But now the bourgeois had grown stiff-jointed. In Arabia, as on the battle-fields of Flanders, the bourgeois fighting-machine had become as obsolete as a mammoth. A feudal society could baffle it. Lawrence was the first to make this discovery, and with his intuitive knowledge he struck at the weak points of the bourgeois fighting-machine, at its clumsy technical organisation, its inefficiency, its dependence on supplies. Moreover, simply because he loathed the values of bourgeois society, he could sway the minds of desert Arabs. Even, most difficult task of all, he could bribe without offence a patriarchal people to whom, unlike a bourgeois class, money is not everything, the sole bond of society.

So Lawrence freed Arabia. But what had he freed it for ? If one frees a society whose social organisation belongs to the past, but has been preserved by a decadent autocracy, what can it do but advance to the present ? If one gives a country liberty as the bourgeois understands it, liberty to be a self-governnig 'independent' bourgeois state, what can come into being there but bourgeois social relations ?

So the Arabs Lawrence freed met two fates, apparently dissimilar but in essence the same. Some became

part of the French Empire. Others were permitted to set up under British tutelage but with a king of their own blood, a complete bourgeois state, Iraq, with government, police, oil concessions, and all the other bourgeois paraphernalia.

Lawrence felt that he and the British Government had betrayed some of the Arabs. But he never fully realised how completely he had betrayed them all. He had brought into Arabia the very evil he had fled. Soon his desert Arabs would have money, businesses, investments, loud-speakers, and regular employment. But he could not realise this consciously, for he had never been fully conscious that it was bourgeois social relations he was fleeing, and he was not aware of the omnipotent destructive power of the present over the past. He was in fact like a man who, fleeing blindly from a deadly disease to a healthy land, himself afflicts it with the plague. Had he fully realised all this, he could also have comforted himself with the reflection that it was inevitable, that the past must bow to the present unless, indeed, as in Russia, it can invoke a stronger ally, and because the future is already ripe for delivery in the womb of the present, bring the future into being. Such work demands not only heroes, but that the future is ready to appear, is already fully implicit. And it is not so in the wilds of Arabia.

Thus Lawrence could not realise clearly what had happened, but this he could realise, that Syria and Iraq were no answer to the nostalgia of his life and no great issue to his ruthless and extravagant expense of spirit.

In those bitter after-days Lawrence still heard that imperious call and tasted all the decay of dying bourgeois culture. He saw this decay in all State ceremony, in all the politenesses of society in the glare of 'publicity'. On every manifestation of bourgeois culture he saw the same dreadful slime. Only in the ranks of the Army he found a stunted version of his ideal, barren of fulfilment but at least free from dishonour. In the Army, at least, though men have taken the King's shilling, it is not the search for profit that holds the fabric together, but it is based on a simple social imperative and wields a force that never reckons its dividends. Like a kind of Arabian desert in the heart of the vulgar luxury of bourgeoisdom, the bare tents of the Army shield a simple comradeship, a social existence free from competition or hate. It is both survival and anticipation, for on the one hand it conserves old feudal relations, as they were before bourgeoisdom burst them, and on the other hand it prophesies like a rudimentary symbol the community of to-morrow united by ties of common effort and not of cash. This man desperately sick of bourgeois relations found in the Services something not found elsewhere, a comradeship of work as well as play, a sterile and yet comforting reminder of finer things. In peace the unproductive labour of a Fighting Service irks it, and fills the members in spite of their comradeship with a constant nagging sense of impotence. But when war comes and the issues of society are put into its hands by a bourgeoisie which in emergency is prepared to abandon the arbitrament of cash and law for

the arbitrament of blood and violence to protect or extend its own—then an Army realises itself. In spite of all war's horror and dangers, a kind of wild elation and well-being fills it, and millions of men who fought in the war can testify to the collective delirium that lifted them out of the greyness of bourgeois existence.

Even this peace-time impotence was better to Lawrence than the bourgeois relations which his soul revolted at. So he entered a Fighting Service. Not as an officer. It was bourgeoisdom he detested, and it would have been impossible for him to enter that class which preserved even in the Army the characteristics he loathed. He entered the ranks. He showed by this gesture his intuitive knowledge that the nostalgia of his life was for the future, the world of the proletariat. But still the conscious forms of his education prevented him from understanding himself.

He embraced, not only the proletariat, but the machine. In those bitter later years, machines had a fascination for him. The aeroplane, the motor-cycle and the motor-boat seemed to him entities somehow possessed of a strange power for man. He said and wrote that to participate in the conquest of the air was at least a work not altogether vain, yet why he could not say. With the machine was the future ; and yet it was not in the machine as a profit-maker that he was interested.

He was right. In the machine lay the significance he sought. But not in the machine as mere machine, but in the machine consciously controlled by man, by whose use he could regain the freedom and equality of primi-

tive relations without losing the rich consciousness of the ages of European culture. The instrument was in Lawrence's hands, as it is in bourgeois hands, but like them he did not know how to use it. Like the bourgeoisie he became intoxicated with the giddy sense of power of this machine, careering to disaster on it, supposing that he controlled it because it went faster and faster. They found him one day unconscious beside his huge motor-cycle, which he had not learned to control. A few days later Lawrence was dead.

What halted Lawrence on the nearside of achievement so that instead of becoming the communist hero, which his gifts and his hatred for the evils of capitalism fitted him for, he became a bourgeois hero who miscarried? Lawrence's tragedy was partly due to his education. He was too intellectual. The hero should have plenty of native intelligence, but to be intellectual means that one's psychic potentialities have been fully developed into the current forms. Lawrence was a man of high consciousness, but it was the consciousness of a culture now doomed. All the outworn symbols of the long noonday of bourgeois culture stiffened his prodigious memory, and made of his genius an elaborate osseous structure too tenacious for the instinctive movement of his soul. That is why thought, devised only to aid action, yet often seems to hamper action. Lawrence himself believed that his was the tragedy of the man of action who is also a thinker. This was to make his tragedy too simple. The deadlock was more profound and significant.

Other heroes have been educated and have overcome it in struggling for the past; they have achieved the future. Why could not he? A new factor entered into Lawrence's tragedy which can best be understood by considering Lenin. Lenin is a hero of a stamp so different from the heroes of the past that one is tempted at first to revise one's definition of the hero. The hero of past history was impelled by social forces he did not understand, whose power he symbolised in vague aspirations. Often he thought it was the past he was trying to create, or like a Joan of Arc he was following simply 'Divine Guidance', or 'Voices'. Such heroes create the future darkly, unaware of what they do or why they do it.

Lenin had no doubt as to his task. The future he had to call into being was Communist society and he knew how it was contained within and could be released from bourgeois social relations. He did not merely know this intuitively but all is clearly set down in his speeches and writings. He did not know the distinctive qualities of the future, for no one can know these, but he knew its general shape and the most important causal laws shaping social relations just as the scientist without knowing the qualities of the future knows certain causal laws that enable him to predict the tides and if necessary take advantage of them. This is the essence of prediction: a certain continuity of like persists in the process of reality and is the substrate of the continual development of the unlike which is Becoming. Like and unlike are not mutually exclusive entities, but one becomes

another, and the change of one is the change of another. Quality just because it is unlike emerges suddenly, dialectically, as a new mutation. Quantity changes only gradually : it remains within the ambit of known relations. It is always the like with which science is concerned—the electron, time, space, radiation, and the conservation laws connecting them. Because it restricts its attention to known relations science can predict the knowable element in the future. To this degree the scientist of sociology can know the future. This Lenin did. But the heroes of old were necessarily ignorant even of the quantitative basis of the future. Lenin, although a man of action, was thus devoid of the mysticism, the ‘ lucky ’ character of the hero, and took on much of the cognitive character of the scientist.

Yet was not this development essential in a man who was to bring to birth a society whose essence, distinguishing it from all earlier social relations, is that in it human beings are cognitively conscious of social relations, and understand not merely the environment of society like bourgeois culture, but society itself? Only the self-conscious hero could lead man towards the self-conscious society. If the characteristic of communism was to be that it would replace religion, mysticism, ‘ race ’, and all the symbolical formulations in which men have clothed their dark intuitions of the true nature of social relations, the banner-bearers of communism must be equally freed of myth and illusion. Such men must not see society as the active theatre of gods, demons, or vague statuesque personifications of Liberty,

Fraternity and the Natural Man, but as it is in its causality. Lenin was able to do this, for Marx had already exposed the causal laws of society. Lenin, then, begins the new race of heroes or leaders just as Hitler and Mussolini stand at the end of the long illustrious line of anti-heroes or charlatans. It is not possible now for the hero, guided by an instinctive feeling, to do the right thing against his own intellectual limitations. Such heroes will like Lawrence only be strangled by their own consciousnesses. The very demand of communism, that man be conscious not merely of what he wills but of what determines that will, requires an equal consciousness of a communist leader.

It was Lawrence's tragedy that he was baffled not merely by his intellectualism, but by the very nature of the new world whose cry for deliverance he had heard in his dreams. Other heroes, despite the distorting bias of yesterday's consciousness, have managed to find the right path, pulled along it by the overwhelming force of the day's experience. But no more such 'instinctive' heroes are to be born. Before Lawrence could be a hero, it was not enough to disregard his consciousness, he had first to shatter it and build it anew on a wider and firmer basis. And how could he find that new consciousness in the groves of Oxford, or in the stark Arabian waste, still virginal to market and machine?

Thus the task of the heroes of to-morrow is more strenuous and yet more satisfying than that of the strong ones who lived before Lenin. They must first know what it is they help to bring to birth, but knowing it



they will know also that they *can* bring it to birth, that they are dependent, not on luck, on divine inspiration, or on an ancestral Aphrodite, but that they are part of the causality which is the self-determination of the Universe. This is the end of the hero who lives a myth and of the fairy-tales he tells his followers. The childhood of the human race, with all its appealing simplicity and pretty make-believe, is past, and its heroes too must be adult.

In China, too, a race of simple and peasant people, of millions captive to poverty and insolence, have been stirred to action by the name of liberty. It is not a story of one hero, but of an army of heroes, performing exploits believed impossible, not aided by bourgeois gold, but repelling again and again attacks financed by bourgeois gold, armed by bourgeois powers, directed by bourgeois experts. This national rising, led by the Red Army of China, and growing constantly in fire and influence, is also inspired by the name of liberty, but it is not bourgeois liberty. Bourgeois liberty, in the shape of Japanese Imperialism, British banking, and American trade, unites with the bourgeois Kuomintang Government to crush it. The Red Army is a Communist Army, and wherever it moves it establishes village soviets. Its leaders and its rank and file have read the words of Marx, Lenin and Stalin. While oil finance tightens its clutches on Iraq, creation of Lawrence, the liberator, the bourgeois hero, Chinese nationalism, baffled and outraged for so long, finds its last ardent victorious issue in Communism.

### III

## D. H. LAWRENCE

### A STUDY OF THE BOURGEOIS ARTIST

WHAT is the function of the artist? Any artist such as Lawrence, who aims to be 'more than' an artist, necessarily raises this question. It is supposed to be the teaching of Marxism that art for art's sake is an illusion and that art must be propaganda. This is, however, making the usual bourgeois simplification of a complex matter.

Art is a social function. This is not a Marxist demand, but arises from the very way in which art forms are defined. Only those things are recognised as art forms which have a conscious social function. The phantasies of a dreamer are not art. They only become art when they are given music, forms or words, when they are clothed in socially recognised symbols, and of course in the process there is a modification. The phantasies are modified by the social dress; the language as a whole acquires new associations and context. No chance sounds constitute music, but sounds selected from a socially recognised scale and played on socially developed instruments.

It is not for Marxism therefore to demand that art

play a social function or to attack the conception of 'art for art's sake', for art only *is* art, and recognisable as such, in so far as it plays a social function. What is of importance to art, Marxism and society is the question: *What social function is art playing?* This in turn depends on the type of society in which it is secreted.

In bourgeois society social relations are denied in the form of relations between men, and take the form of a relation between man and a thing, a property relation, which, because it is a dominating relation, is believed to make man free. But this is an illusion. The property relation is only a disguise for relations which now become unconscious and therefore anarchic but are still between man and man and in particular between exploiter and exploited.

The artist in bourgeois culture is asked to do the same thing. He is asked to regard the art work as a finished commodity and the process of art as a relation between himself and the work, which then disappears into the market. There is a further relation between the art work and the buyer, but with this he can hardly be immediately concerned. The whole pressure of bourgeois society is to make him regard the art work as hypostatised and his relation to it as primarily that of a producer for the market.

This will have two results.

(1) The mere fact that he has to earn his living by the sale of the concrete hypostatised entity as a property right—copyright, picture, statue—may drive him to

estimate his work as an artist by the market chances which produce a high total return for these property rights. This leads to the commercialisation or vulgarisation of art.

(ii) But art is not in any case a relation to a thing, it is a relation between men, between artist and audience, and the art work is only like a machine which they must both grasp as part of the process. The commercialisation of art may revolt the sincere artist, but the tragedy is that he revolts against it still within the limitations of bourgeois culture. He attempts to forget the market completely and concentrate on his relation to the art work, which now becomes still further hypostatized as an entity-in-itself. Because the art work is now completely an end-in-itself, and even the market is forgotten, the art process becomes an extremely individualistic relation. The social values inherent in the art form, such as syntax, tradition, rules, technique, form, accepted tonal scale, now seem to have little value, for the art work more and more exists for the individual alone. The art work is necessarily always the product of a tension between old conscious social formulations—the art ‘form’—and new individual experience made conscious—the art ‘content’ or the artist’s ‘message’. This is the synthesis, the specifically hard task of creation. But the hypostatisation of the art work as the goal makes old conscious social formulations less and less important, and individual experience more and more dominating. As a result art becomes more and more formless,

personal, and individualistic, culminating in Dadaism, surréalisme and 'Steining'.

Thus bourgeois art disintegrates under the tension of two forces, both arising from the same feature of bourgeois culture. On the one hand there is production for the market—vulgarisation, commercialisation. On the other there is hypostatisation of the art work as the goal of the art process, and the relation between art work and individual as paramount. This necessarily leads to a dissolution of those social values which make the art in question a social relation, and therefore ultimately results in the art work's ceasing to be an art work and becoming a mere private phantasy.

All bourgeois art during the last two centuries shows the steady development of this bifurcation. As long as the social values inherent in an art form are not disintegrated—e.g. up to say 1910—the artist who hypostatizes the art form and despises the market can produce good art. After that, it becomes steadily more difficult. Needless to say, the complete acceptance of the market, being a refusal to regard any part of the art process as a social process, is even more incompetent to produce great art. Anything which helps the artist to escape from the bourgeois trap and become conscious of social relations inherent in art, will help to delay the rot. For this reason the novel is the last surviving literary art form in bourgeois culture, for in it, for reasons explained elsewhere, the social relations inherent in the art process are overt. Dorothy Richardson, James Joyce, and Proust, all in different ways are the

last blossoms of the bourgeois novel, for with them the novel begins to disappear as an objective study of social relations and becomes a study of the subject's experience in society. It is then only a step for the thing experienced to disappear and, as in Gertrude Stein, for complete 'me-ness' to reign.

It is inevitable that at this stage the conception of the artist as a pure 'artist' must cease to exist. For commercialised art has become intolerably base and negated itself. And equally art for art's sake (that is, the ignoring of the market and concentration on the perfect art work as a goal in itself) has negated itself, for the art form has ceased to exist, and what was art has become private phantasy. It is for this reason that sincere artists, such as Lawrence, Gide, Romain Rolland, Romain and so on, cannot be content with the beautiful art work, but seem to desert the practice of art for social theory and become novelists of ideas, literary prophets and propaganda novelists. They represent the efforts of bourgeois art, exploded into individualistic phantasy and commercialised muck, to become once more a social process and so be reborn. Whether such art is or can be great art is beside the point, since it is inevitably the pre-requisite for art becoming art again, just as it is beside the point whether the transition from bourgeoisdom to communism is itself smooth or happy or beautiful or free, since it is the inevitable step if bourgeois anarchy and misery is to be healed and society to become happy and free.

But what is art as a social process? What is art, not

as a mere art work or a means of earning a living, but in itself, the part it plays in society? I have dealt fully with this point elsewhere, and need only briefly recapitulate now.

The personal phantasy or day-dream is not art, however beautiful. Nor is the beautiful sunset. Both are only the raw material of art. It is the property of art that it makes mimic pictures of reality which we accept as illusory. We do not suppose the events of a novel really happen, that a landscape shown on a painting can be walked upon—yet it has a measure of reality.

The mimic representation, by the technique appropriate to the art in question, causes the social representation to sweat out of its pores an affective emanation. The emanation is *in* us, *in* our affective reaction with the elements of the representation. Given in the representation are not only the affects, but, simultaneously, their organisation in an affective *attitude* towards the piece of reality symbolised in the mimicry. This affective attitude is bitten in by a general heightening of consciousness and increase in self-value, due to the non-motor nature of the innervations aroused, which seems therefore all to pass into an affective irradiation of consciousness. This affective attitude is not permanent, as is the intellectual attitude towards reality aroused by a cogent scientific argument, but still—because of the mnemonic characteristics of an organism—it remains as an *experience* and must, therefore, in proportion to the amount of conscious poig-

nancy accompanying the experience and the nature of the experience, modify the subject's general attitude towards life itself. This modification tends to make life more interesting to the organism, hence the survival value of art. But viewed from society's standpoint, art is the fashioning of the affective consciousness of its members, the conditioning of their instincts.

Language, simply because it is the most general instrument for communicating views of reality, whether affective and cognitive, has a particularly fluid range of representations of reality. Hence the suppleness and scope of literary art ; the novel, the drama, the poem, the short story, and the essay. It can draw upon all the symbolic pictures of reality made by scientific, historical and discursive intellectual processes. Art can only achieve its purpose if the pictures themselves are made simultaneously to produce affect and organisation. Then, even as the artist holds up to us the piece of reality, it seems already glowing with affective colouring.

Reality constitutes for us our environment ; and our environment, which is chiefly social, alters continuously—sometimes barely perceptibly, sometimes at dizzy speeds. The socially accepted pictures we make in words of reality cannot change as if they were reflections in a mirror. An object is reflected in a mirror. If the object moves the reflection moves. But in language reality is symbolised in unchanging words, which give a false stability and permanence to the object they represent. Thus they instantaneously



photograph reality rather than reflect it. This frigid character of language is regrettable but it has its utilitarian purposes. It is probably the only way in which man, with his linear consciousness, can get a grip of fluid reality. Language, as it develops, shows more and more of this false permanence, till we arrive at the Platonic Ideas, Eternal and Perfect Words. Their eternity and perfection is simply the permanence of print and paper. If you coin a word or write a symbol to describe an entity or event, the word will remain 'eternally' unchanged even while the entity has changed and the event is no longer present. This permanence is part of the inescapable nature of symbolism, which is expressed in the rules of logic. It is one of the strange freaks of the human mind that it has supposed that reality must obey the rules of logic, whereas the correct view is that symbolism by its very nature has certain rules, expressed in the laws of logic, and these are nothing to do with the process of reality, but represent the nature of the symbolic process itself.

The artist experiences this discrepancy between language and reality as follows : he has had an intense experience of a rose and wishes to communicate his experience to his fellows in words. He wishes to say, 'I saw a rose'. But 'rose' has a definite social meaning, or group of meanings, and we are to suppose that he has had an experience with the rose which does not correspond to any of society's previous experiences of roses, embodied in the word and its history. His experience of the rose is therefore the negation of the

word 'rose', it is 'not-rose'—all that in his experience which is not expressed in the current social meaning of the word 'rose'. He therefore says—'I saw a rose like'—and there follows a metaphor, or there is an adjective—'a heavenly rose', or a euphemism—'I saw a flowery blush', and in each case there is a synthesis, for his new experience has become socially fused into society's old experiences and both have been changed in the process. His own experience has taken colour from all past meanings of the word 'rose', for these will be present in men's minds when they read his poem, and the word 'rose' will have taken colour from his individual experience, for his poem will in future be in men's minds when they encounter the word 'rose'.

But why was the poet's experience different from society's tradition? Because that cross-section of his environment which we call his individual life-experience was different. But if we take all society's art as a whole, i.e. the sum of individual cross-sections, we get on the one hand the whole experience of the environment averaged out, and also the average man, or average genotype. Now the constant genesis of new art must mean that the environment is changing, so that man's individual experiences are changing, and he is constantly finding inherited social conscious formulations inadequate and requiring resynthesis. Thus if art forms remain unchanged and traditional, as in Chinese civilisation, it is evident that the environment—social relations—are static. If they decay the environment is

on the down-grade, as with current bourgeois culture. If they improve, the reverse is the case. But the artist's value is not in *self-expression*. If so, why should he struggle to achieve the synthesis in which old social formulations are fused with his individual experience? Why not disregard social formalities and express himself direct as one does by shouting, leaping, and cries? Because, to begin with, it is the old bourgeois illusion to suppose there is such a thing as pure individual expression. It is not even that the artist nobly forces his self-expression into a social mould for the benefit of society. Both attitudes are simply expressions of the old bourgeois fallacy that man is free in freely giving vent to his instincts. In fact the artist does not express himself in art forms, he finds himself therein. He does not adulterate his free self-expression to make it socially current, he finds free self-expression only in the social relations embodied in art. The value of art to the artist then is this, that it makes him free. It appears to him of value as a self-expression, but in fact is is not the expression of a self but the discovery of a self. It is the creation of a self. In synthesising experience with society's, in pressing his inner self into the mould of social relations, he not only creates a new mould, a socially valuable product, but he also moulds and creates his own self. The mute inglorious Milton is a fallacy. Miltons are made not born.

The value of art to society is that by it an emotional adaptation is possible. Man's instincts are pressed in art against the altered mould of reality, and by a

specific organisation of the emotions thus generated, there is a new attitude, an *adaptation*.

All art is produced by this tension between changing social relations and outmoded consciousness. The very reason why new art is created, why the old art does not satisfy either artist or appreciator, is because it seems somehow out of gear with the present. Old art always has meaning for us, because the instincts, the source of the affects, do not change, because a new system of social relations does not exclude but includes the old, and because new art too includes the traditions of the art that has gone before. But it is not enough. We must have new art.

And new art results from tension. This tension takes two forms. (i) One is productive—the evolutionary form. The tension between productive relations and productive forces secures the advance of society as a whole, simply by producing in an even more pronounced form the contradiction which was the source of the dynamism. Thus bourgeois culture by continually dissolving the relations between men for relations to a thing, and thus hypostatizing the market, procured the growth of industrial capitalism. And, in the sphere of art it produced the increasing individualism which, seen at its best in Shakespeare, was a positive value, but pushed to its limit finally spelt the complete breakdown of art in *surréalism*, *Dadaism* and *Steinism*.

(ii) The tension now becomes revolutionary. For productive relations are a brake on productive forces and the tension between them, instead of altering pro-

ductive relations in the direction of giving better outlet to productive forces, has the opposite effect. It drives productive relations on still further into negation, increases the tension, and prepares the explosion which will shatter the old productive relations and enable them to be rebuilt anew—not arbitrarily, but according to a pattern which will itself be given by the circumstances of the tension. Thus in art the tension between individualism and the increasing complexity and catastrophes of the artist's environment, between the free following of dream and the rude blows of anarchic reality, wakes the artist from his dream and forces him in spite of himself to look at the world, not merely as an artist, but also as a man, as a citizen, as a sociologist. It forces him to be interested in things not strictly germane to art;—politics, economics, science, and philosophy, just as it did during the early bourgeois Renaissance, producing 'all-round men' like Leonardo da Vinci. Whether this is good for art or not is beside the point. Bourgeois art like bourgeois culture is moribund and this process is an inevitable concomitant of the stage proceeding art's rebirth. And because of this intervening period, the new art when it emerges will be art more conscious of itself as part of the whole social process, will be *communist* art. This explains why all modern artists of any significance such as Lawrence, Gide, Aragon, dos Passos, Eliot and so on, cannot be content to be 'pure' artists, but must also be prophets, thinkers, philosophers, and politicians, men interested in life and social reality as a whole. They are conscious

of having a message. This is the inevitable effect on art of a revolutionary period, and it is not possible to escape from it into 'pure' art, into the ivory tower, for now there is no pure art ; that phase is either over or not yet begun.

But at a revolution two paths are possible. So indeed they are in evolution—one can either stay still and be classical, academic and null, or go forward. But at a time of revolution it is not possible to stay still, one must either go forward, or back. To us this choice appears as a choice between Communism and Fascism, either to create the future or to go back to old primitive values, to mythology, racialism, nationalism, hero-worship, and *participation mystique*. This Fascist art is like the regression of the neurotic to a previous level of adaptation.

It is Lawrence's importance as an artist that he was well aware of the fact that the pure artist cannot exist to-day, and that the artist must inevitably be a man hating cash relationships and the market, and profoundly interested in the relations between persons. Moreover, he must be a man not merely profoundly interested in the relations between persons as they are, but interested in changing them, dissatisfied with them as they are, and wanting newer and fuller values in personal relationships.

But it is Lawrence's final tragedy that his solution was ultimately Fascist and not Communist. It was regressive. Lawrence wanted us to return to the past, to the 'Mother'. He sees human discontent as the

yearning of the solar plexus for the umbilical connexion, and he demands the substitution for sharp sexual love of the unconscious fleshy identification of foetus with mother. All this was symbolic of regression, of neurosis, of the return to the primitive.

Lawrence felt that the Europe of to-day was moribund; and he turned therefore to other forms of existence, in Mexico, Etruria and Sicily, where he found or thought he found systems of social relations in which life flowed more easily and more meaningfully. The life of Bourgeois Europe seemed to him permeated with possessiveness and rationalising, so that it had got out of gear with the simple needs of the body. In a thousand forms he repeats this indictment of a civilisation which consciously *and just because it is conscious*—sins against the instinctive currents which are man's primal source of energy. It is a mistake to suppose that Lawrence preaches the gospel of sex. Bourgeois Europe has had its bellyful of sex, and a sex cult would not now attract the interest and emotional support which Lawrence's teaching received. Lawrence's gospel was purely sociological. Even sex was too conscious for him.

'Anybody who calls my novel (Lady Chatterley's Lover) a dirty sexual novel, is a liar. It's not even a sexual novel: it's a phallic. Sex is a thing that exists in the head, its reactions are cerebral, and its processes mental. Whereas the phallic reality is warm and spontaneous——'

Again he wrote :

‘What ails me is the absolute frustration of my primitive societal instinct . . . I think societal instinct much deeper than the sex instinct—and societal repression much more devastating. There is no repression of the sexual individual comparable to the repression of the societal man in me, by the individual ego, my own and everybody else’s. I am weary even of my own individuality, and simply nauseated by other people’s.’

One more analysis by him of the evil in bourgeois culture : (In the Cornish people)—

‘the old race is still revealed, a race which believed in the darkness, in magic, and in the magic transcendency of one man over another which is fascinating. Also there is left some of the old sensuousness of the darkness and warmth and passionateness of the blood, sudden, incalculable. Whereas they are like insects, gone cold, living only for money, for *dirt*. They are foul in this. They ought to die.’

Now here is a clear artistic, i.e. *emotional*, analysis of the decay of bourgeois social relations. They live for money, the societal instinct is repressed, even the sex relations have become cold and infected. Survivals of barbaric social relations between men (the ‘magic transcendency’ of man over man) stand out as valuable in a culture where these relations have become relations between man and a thing, *man and dirt*.



But Lawrence does not look for a cause in social relations themselves, but in man's consciousness of them. The solution of the individual's needs is then plainly to be found in a return to instinctive living. But how are we to return to instinctive living? By casting off consciousness; we must return along the path we have come. But intellectualism consists in this, that we give either linguistically, plastically, or mentally, a symbolic projection to portions of reality, and consciousness or thinking consists simply in shuffling these images or verbal products. If therefore we are to cast off intellectualism and consciousness we must abandon all symbolism and rationalisation *tout court*, we must *be*, and no longer think, even in images. Yet on the contrary Lawrence again and again *consciously* formulates his creed in intellectual terms or terms of imagery. But this is self-contradiction, for how can we be led intellectually and consciously *back* from consciousness? It is our consciousness that Lawrence attempts to extend and heighten even at the moment he urges us to abandon it.

Consciousness can only be abandoned in action, and the first action of Fascism is the crushing of culture and the burning of the books. It is impossible therefore for an artist and thinker to be a consistent Fascist. He can only be like Lawrence, a self-contradictory one, who appeals to the consciousness of men to abandon consciousness.

There is a confusion here due to equating consciousness with thinking and unconsciousness with feeling.

This is wrong. Both are conscious. No one ever had or could have an unconscious affect or emotion. Feeling indeed is what makes the unconscious memory-traces conscious, and heats them into thoughts. All of us, in times of deep feeling, whether artistic or emotional feeling, are aware of heightened consciousness almost like a white light in us so intense and clear is it. But Lawrence never clearly saw this, and constantly equates unconsciousness with feeling and consciousness with intellect. For example :

‘ My great religion is a belief in the blood, in the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what our blood feels and believes and says is always true. The intellect is only a bit and a bridle. What do I care about knowledge ? All I want is to answer to my blood, direct, without fumbling intervention of mind, or moral, or what not. I conceive a man’s body as a kind of flame, like a candle flame forever upright and yet flowing : and the intellect is just the light that is shed on the things around, coming God knows how from out of practically nowhere, and being *itself*, whatever there is around it that it lights up. We have got so ridiculously mindful, that we never know that we ourselves are anything—we think there are only the objects we shine upon. And there the poor flame goes on burning ignored, to produce this light. And instead of chasing the mystery in the fugitive, half-lighted things outside us, we ought to look at ourselves and say, “ My God,

I am myself!" That is why I like to live in Italy. The people are so unconscious. They only feel and want, they don't know. We know too much. No, we only *think* we know such a lot. A flame isn't a flame because it lights up two, or twenty objects on a table. It's a flame because it is itself. And we have forgotten ourselves.'

Feeling and thinking play into each other's hands and heighten each other. Man feels more deeply than the slug because he thinks more. Why did Lawrence make this error of supposing them essentially exclusive, and equate feeling with unconsciousness? Once again, the answer is in the nature of current society. All feeling and all thinking must contain something of each other to form part of consciousness at all. But it is possible to distinguish certain conscious phenomena as chiefly feeling, or vice versa. 'Pure' feelings, any more than 'Pure' thoughts, do not exist at all, since the first would be a mere instinctive tendency, the second nothing but a mnemonic trace. Both would be unconscious and evidenced therefore only in behaviour. Lawrence might mean that feeling has wilted under modern conditions and that we must expand the feeling basis of our consciousness.

We know this of feelings (and affects generally) that they come into consciousness associated with innate responses or—more loosely—that they seem to be born of the modification, by experience and in action of the 'instincts'. Instinct going out in un-

modified action, in mechanical response to a stimulus, is without *feeling*, it is pure automatism. Only when it becomes modified by memory traces or stifled by action does it become conscious and appear as feeling. The more intelligent the animal, the more its behaviour is modifiable by experience, the more feeling it displays. This extra display of feeling is *because* it is more intelligent, more conscious, less swayed by heredity, more subject to personal experience. Modification of innate responses by experience simply implies that previous behaviour leaves a mnemonic trace on the neurones, chiefly of the cortex. These when innervated produce a new pattern, whose modification takes in the cortical sphere the form of thoughts and, in the visceral and thalamic sphere, the form of feelings or emotional dynamism. The different proportion of the components decides whether we call them thoughts or feelings. Even the simplest thought is irradiated with affect, and even the simplest emotion is accompanied by a thought, not necessarily verbalised but of some such character as 'I am hurt', or 'A pain'. It is because thought and feeling arise from the same modification of innate responses, by experience, that the growth of intelligence, i.e. of the *capacity* for modification of behaviour by experience, is accompanied by a steadily increasing emotional complexity, richness, and deepness. It is plain that the growth of civilisation in *Homo Sapiens* has been accompanied by a steady increase in sensibility to pain and pleasure. This is the famous 'sensitiveness' of civilised man, the 'luxury' of high

cultures, which is also manifested in their art and their vocabulary. Primitive peoples on the other hand show a marked deficiency in their sensibility, not only to refined emotions but even the cruder ones. The extremely erotic character of savage dances is not due, as some observers naively suppose, to the emotional erethism of the natives, but to the reverse, that in them the erotic impulses, owing to their deficient sensibility, can only be aroused by violent stimulation, whereas a slight stimulus will set off the hair-trigger emotions of civilised people. The same phenomenon is shown in primitive insensibility to pain. Consequently if we are to return down the path we have come from, back to primitiveness, to the blood, to the flesh, it is not only to less and cruder thought but also to less and cruder feeling, to a lessened consciousness in which feeling and thought, precisely because they are less rich and complex, will be more intimately mingled, until finally, as they both blend completely and become one, they vanish and nothing is left but unconscious *behaviour*. But how can this goal be of value to an artist, save on condition he denies himself the very law of his being? Art is not unconscious behaviour, it is conscious feeling.

It is, however, possible to broaden feeling without altering thought or losing consciousness, by altering the ratio between them in modern civilisation. That is precisely the purpose of art, for the artist makes use always of just those verbal or pictorial images of reality which are more charged with feeling than

cognition, and he organises them in such a way that the affects re-inforce each other and fuse to a glowing mass. Consequently, he who believes that at all costs the feeling element must be broadened in present-day consciousness, must preach and secure, not the contraction of all consciousness, but the widening of feeling consciousness. This is art's mission. Art is the technique of affective manipulation in relation to reality. Lawrence was doing what I suppose him to have wished to do, just when he was artist pure and simple, sensitively recording the spirit of a place or the emotions of real people—in his early work. In proportion as he became a prophet, preaching a gospel intellectually, he departed from that goal.

How did he come to make first the initial *sortie* in favour of feeling, and then the contradictory error, deserting art for preaching? He came to the first conclusion because feeling is impoverished by modern bourgeois culture. Social relations, by ceasing to be between man and man and adhering to a thing, become emptied of tenderness. Man feels himself deprived of love. His whole instinct revolts against this. He feels a vast maladaptation to his environment. Lawrence perceives this clearly when he talks about the repression of the societal instinct.

But things have gone so far that no tinkering with social relations, no adaptation of the instincts to the environment by means of art, will cure this. Social relations themselves must be rebuilt. The artist is bound for the sake of his integrity to become thinker

and revolutionary. Lawrence therefore was bound not to be content with pure art, with widening feeling consciousness in the old circle. He had to try and recast social relations and proceed to a solution. But there is only one revolutionary solution. Social relations must be altered, not so as to contract consciousness but so as to widen it. The higher feeling must be found, not in a lower but as always in a higher level of culture.

Naturally consciousness seems in bourgeois culture now, as in all periods of decay, full of defects with which being struggles, and this seems like unconsciousness crippled by consciousness. Those defects in bourgeois social relations all arise from the cash nexus which replaces all other social ties, so that society seems held together, not by mutual love or tenderness or obligation, but simply by profit. Money makes the bourgeois world go round and this means that selfishness is the hinge on which bourgeois society turns, for money is a dominating relation to an owned thing. This commercialisation of all social relations invades the most intimate of emotions, and the relations of the sexes are affected by the differing economic situations of man and woman. The notion of private property, aggravated by its importance and overwhelming power in bourgeois relations, extends to love itself. Because economic relations in capitalism are simply each man struggling for himself in the impersonal market, the world seems torn apart with the black forces of envy, covetousness and hate, which

mix with and make ambivalent even the most 'altruistic' emotions.

But it is simplifying the drama to make it a struggle between contemporary consciousness and old being. It is a conflict between productive relations and productive powers, between the contemporary formulations of consciousness, and all the possibilities of future being including consciousness latent in society and struggling to be released from their bonds. Bourgeois defects are implicit in bourgeois civilisation and therefore in bourgeois consciousness. Hence man wants to turn against the intellect, for it seems that the intellect is his enemy, and indeed it is, if by intellect we mean the bourgeois intellect. But it can only be fought with intellect. To deny intellect is to assist the forces of conservatism. In hundreds of diverse forms we see to-day the useless European revolt against intellectualism.

In any civilisation the rôle of consciousness is to modify instinctive responses so that they flow smoothly into the mill of social relations and turn it. Instinct not money really turns the social mill, though in the bourgeois world instinctive relations can only operate along the money channel. Hence when social relations come to be a brake on society's forces, there is felt a conflict between the social relations and the instincts. It seems as if the feelings were out of gear, as if the world was uncomfortable and hurt the feelings and repressed them. It seems as if the instincts, and the feelings, those products of the instincts, were being



penalised by the environment, and that, therefore, the instincts and feelings must be 'given their due', must be exalted even if it means breaking up and abandoning the civilised environment for a more primitive one. To-day this exaltation of the instincts is seen in all demands for a return to deeper 'feeling' as with Lawrence, and in all worships of unconscious 'mentation', as with the *surréalists*, Hemingways, and Fascists. In individuals this mechanism is infantile regression, seen in its pathological form in the neuroses.

Now these mechanisms involve the discovery of a real defect. Social being is held back by social consciousness; the instincts *are* thwarted and the feelings *are* made poor by the environment. But the remedy is wrong. The neurotic cannot, as we know, be cured by infantile regression. All it does for him is to secure him unconsciousness and take from him painful thoughts, at the price of a lowering of consciousness and an impoverishing of values. Civilisation cannot be cured by going back along the path to the primitive, it can only become at a lower level more unconscious of its decay. Just as the neurotic's return to childhood solutions of problems is unhealthier than childhood, so a civilisation's return to a primitive solution is unhealthier than primitive life itself. The very history between makes such solutions unreal. To the primitive these problems have never existed. To the regressive they have existed but he has repressed them. It is into the wilderness these people would

lead us. They preach, not new vigour, but old decadence.

What then is the cure? We know that both in the case of the neurotic and the civilisation, the cure is a more strenuous and creative act than the invalid's relapse into the womb of that unconsciousness from which we emerged. Our task is to be performed, not in an air heavy and fetid with mysteries and dead symbolism like that of a cavern used for old obscene rites, but in the open air.

We are not to return to the old but it is into the new we must go; and the new does not exist, we must bring it into being. The child would love to return to the womb, but it must become adult and face the strenuous and bracing tasks of life. We are not to abandon consciousness but to expand it, to deepen and purge feeling and break up and recast thought, and this new consciousness does not exist in any thing's keeping either Mexicans or Yogis or the 'blood' but we must make it ourselves. In this struggle with reality in which instincts, feeling and thought all partake and interact, the instincts themselves will be changed, and emerging in consciousness as new thought and new feeling, will once again feel themselves in harmony with the new environment they have created. Social relations must be changed so that love returns to the earth and man is not only wiser but more full of emotion. This is not a task which one prophet can perform in one Gospel, but since the whole fabric of social relations are to be changed, every human being

must in some sort participate in the change, be either for it or against it, and be victorious if he is for it and be defeated if he is against it.

Why did Lawrence, faced with the problem, fail of a solution? He failed because while hating bourgeois culture he never succeeded in escaping from its limitations. Here in him, too, we see the same old lie. Man is 'free' in so far as his 'free' instincts, the 'blood', the 'flesh', are given an outlet. Man is free not through but *in spite of* social relations.

If one believes this—which, as we have seen, is the deepest and most ineradicable bourgeois illusion, all others are built on this—one must, if one is hurt by bourgeois social relations, see security and freedom only in casting them off, and returning to a primitive state with less 'constraints'. One must necessarily believe freedom and happiness can be found by one's own individual action. One will not believe freedom and happiness can only be found through social relations, by co-operating with others to change them, but there is always something one can do, fly to Mexico, find the right woman or the right friends, and so discover salvation. One will never see the truth, that one can only find salvation for oneself by finding it for all others at the same time.

Lawrence therefore could never escape from this essential selfishness—not a petty selfishness but the selfishness which is the pattern of bourgeois culture and is revealed in pacifism, Protestantism, and all varieties of salvation obtained by individual action.

The world to which Lawrence wished to return is not really the world of primitives who are in fact bound by more rigid relations than those of bourgeois Europe. It is the old bourgeois pastoral heaven of the 'natural man' born everywhere in chains, which does not exist. It does not exist because it is self-contradictory, and because it is self-contradictory the bourgeois world in striving for it more clearly produces the opposite, as in moving towards an object in a mirror we move away from the real object. Lawrence's gospel therefore only forms part of the self-destructive element in bourgeois culture.

Lawrence for all his gifts suffered from the old *petit bourgeois* errors. Like Wells, he strove to climb upwards into the world of bourgeois culture; being more artistic than Wells and born in a later era, it could not be the security and power of that already sick class that appealed to him. It was their cultural values. He succeeded in entering that world and drinking deeply of all its tremendous intellectual and æsthetic riches, only to find them riches turning into dust. The shock of that disillusion, added to the pain endured in that climb, filled him finally with a hatred for bourgeois values. He could criticise them relentlessly and bitterly, but he could provide no solution for the whole set of his life; all that long difficult climb of his into the bourgeois sunshine ensured that he remained a bourgeois. His was always bourgeois culture, conscious of its decay, criticising itself and with no solution except to go back to a time when things were different and

so undo all the development that had brought bourgeois culture to this pass.

Had he been born later, had that sunlit world never appealed to him so irresistibly, he might have seen that it was the proletariat—to whom he was so near at the start of his climb—that was the dynamic force of the future. Not only would he then have had a standpoint outside bourgeois culture from which to criticise it, but from that position he would have been able to find the true solution—in the future, not the past. But Lawrence remained to the end a man incapable of that subordination of self to others, of co-operation, of solidarity as a class, which is the characteristic of the proletariat. He remained the individualist, the bourgeois revolutionary angrily working out his own salvation, critical of all, alone in possession of grace. He rid himself of every bourgeois illusion but the important one. He saw finally neither the world nor himself as it really was. He saw the march of events as a bourgeois tragedy, which is true but unimportant. The important thing, which was absolutely closed to him, was that it was also a proletarian renaissance.

Everywhere to-day will be found the conscious or unconscious followers of Lawrence—the pacifists, the snug little hedonists, the conscientious sexualists, the well-meaning Liberals, the idealists, all seeking the impossible solution, salvation through the free act of the individual will amid decay and disaster. They may find a temporary solution, a momentary happiness, although I judge Lawrence to have found neither.

But it is of its nature unstable, for external events to which they have regressively adjusted themselves, beget incessantly new horrors and undreamed-of disasters. What avails such pinchbeck constructs during the screaming horror of a War? One may stop one's ears and hide oneself in Cornwall like Lawrence, but the cry of one's millions of suffering fellow-humans reaches one's ears and tortures one. And, the War at last survived, there come new horrors. The eating disintegration of the slump. Nazism outpouring a flood of barbarism and horror. And what next? Armaments piling up like an accumulating catastrophe, mass neurosis, nations like mad dogs. All this seems gratuitous, horrible, cosmic to such people, unaware of the causes. How can the bourgeois still pretend to be free, to find salvation individually? Only by sinking himself in still cruder illusions, by denying art, science, emotion, even ultimately life itself. Humanism, the creation of bourgeois culture, finally separates from it. Against the sky stands Capitalism without a rag to cover it, naked in its terror. And humanism, leaving it, or rather, forcibly thrust aside, must either pass into the ranks of the proletariat or, going quietly into a corner, cut its throat. Lawrence did not live to face this final issue, which would necessarily make straw of his philosophy and his teaching.

## IV

H. G. WELLS

A STUDY IN UTOPIANISM

*'The Utopian's mode of thought has for a long time governed the socialist ideas of the nineteenth century and still governs some of them. Until very recently all French and English Socialists did homage to it. . . . To all these, Socialism is the expression of absolute truth, reason, and justice, and has only to be discovered to conquer all the world by virtue of its own power. And as absolute truth is independent of time, space, and of the historical development of man, it is a mere accident when and where it is discovered. With all this, absolute truth, reason, and justice are different with the founder of each different school. And as each one's special kind of absolute truth, reason, and justice is again conditioned by his subjective understanding, his conditions of existence, the measure of his knowledge and his intellectual training, there is no other ending possible in this conflict of absolute truths than that they shall be mutually exclusive one of the other. Hence, from this can come nothing but a kind of eclectic, average Socialism, which, as a matter of fact, has up to the present time dominated the minds of most of the Socialist workers in France and England. Hence, a mish-mash allowing of the most manifold shades of opinion ; a*

*mish-mash of such critical statements, economic theories, pictures of future society by the founders of different sects, as excite a minimum of opposition ; a mish-mash which is the more easily brewed the more the definite sharp edges of the individual constituents are rubbed down in the stream of debate, like rounded pebbles in a brook.'*

ENGELS : 'SOCIALISM—UTOPIAN AND SCIENTIFIC.'

IT is evident that long before H. G. Wells had become famous as a writer, Marx's collaborator, in the analysis quoted above, had accurately characterised Wells's Utopianism. Engels was interested, not only in the phenomenon presented by each Utopian socialist who feels that he knows to the last detail what the world ought to be, but in how when these Utopian socialists, each with their precise but widely differing ideas, attempt to co-operate in any way, nothing can result but a general cloudy vagueness inhibiting action. This mixture, as Engels said, is a mish-mash.

The peculiarity of H. G. Wells, however, and the point in which he, as a later development of the school, differs from the earlier Utopian socialists Engels referred to, is in that he is not just one of the contributors to a mish-mash but the mish-mash itself. This was inevitable. Wells's muddled thinking is not due, as he naïvely suggests in his *Experiment in Autobiography*, to some peculiarity of the blood supply to his brain, but to the anarchy of the world in which he was born. To early Utopian socialists the world was something precise, for



bourgeois values were still precise. Equality, freedom and democracy were concepts that seemed to have meaning. How can they now, when equality has in some strange way become domination by trust capital, freedom is wage-slavery and democracy is Fascist Imperialism ?

The Utopian socialists' absolute liberty, freedom, etc., were the bourgeois values of their time, hypostatized as eternal. So are Wells's. But in Engels's time these values were not changing so rapidly as to be transformed into their opposites almost overnight. In Wells's time this is just what has happened. And so each year sees Wells and those like him with a different Utopia and a new world-view. Wells is in the unhappy position of a tailor whose yard-rule alters capriciously in length overnight. Each morning he patiently measures off his yard of cloth, and the result is a long succession of inconsistent bundles of material. With each new book Wells sees Utopias run on new principles ; new forms of salvation for man ; new secret diseases accounting for present discontents ; new Gods, invisible Kings. It is the unreason of it all that sickens Wells. If only man would be reasonable. Yet surely man can hardly be blamed for not trusting to reason if, in Wells's hands, it produces so many diverse solutions, from a universal world-democratic federation to a world run by Samurai-bosses, from Liberal Fascism to a Roosevelt Brain Trust, from an open conspiracy to a world saved by a war so ghastly it destroys civilisation. Surely, rather than trust to the yard-stick of Wells's ideology,

it would be better to go on measuring out the material in the old Victorian bourgeois way. Other men have their separate standards of absolute truth, reason and justice, according to the different parts of the bourgeois system in which they find themselves, and Wells's absolutely just and reasonable Utopias do not appeal to them at all. To God-fearing folk the morals of some of Mr. Wells's Utopias seem most unjust. To the dress trade the nudity of *Men Like Gods* appears far from divine. Business men consider that scientists are unduly important in these States of to-morrow. Even those whose conceptions of the absolute are quite as simple and *petit bourgeois* as those of Wells, cannot fight down an uneasy feeling that the perfectly just, happy and beautiful State he paints would be unutterably boring.

For Wells is a *petit bourgeois*, and of all the products of capitalism, none is more unlovely than this class. Whoever does not escape from it is certainly damned. It is necessarily a class whose whole existence is based on a lie. Functionally it is exploited, but because it is allowed to share in some of the crumbs of exploitation that fall from the rich bourgeois table, it identifies itself with the bourgeois system on which, whether as bank manager, small shopkeeper or upper household servant, it seems to depend. It has only one value in life, that of bettering itself, of getting a step nearer the good bourgeois things so far above it. It has only one horror, that of falling from respectability into the proletarian abyss which, because it is so near, seems so much more dangerous. It is rootless, individualist, lonely, and per-

petually facing, with its hackles up, an antagonistic world. It can never know the security of the rich bourgeoisie or the companionship of the worker. It can never rest on anything, for it is always struggling to better itself. It is the most deluded class, for it has not the cynicism of the worker with practical proof of bourgeois fictions, or the cynicism of the intelligent bourgeois who even while he maintains them for his own purposes sees through the illusions of religion, royalty, patriotism and capitalist 'industry' and 'foresight'. It has no traditions of its own and it does not adopt those of the workers, which it hates, but those of the bourgeois, which are without virtue for it, since it did not help to create them. This world, described so well in *Experiment in Autobiography*, is like a terrible stagnant marsh, all mud and bitterness, and without even the saving grace of tragedy.

Everyone seeks to escape from this marsh. It is a world whose whole motive force is simply this, to escape from what it was born to, upwards, to be rich, secure, a boss. And the development of capitalism increases the depth of this world, makes wealth, security, and freedom more and more difficult, and thus adds to its horror. More and more the petty bourgeois expression is that of a face lined with petty, futile, bewildered discontent. Life with its perplexities and muddles seems to baffle and betray them at every turn. They are frustrated, beaten; things are too much for them. Almost all Wells's characters from Kipps to Clissold are psychologically of this typical *petit bourgeois* frustrated class. They can never understand why every-

thing is so puzzling, why man is so unreasonable, why life is so difficult, precisely because it is they who are so unreasonable. They are born of the irresponsibility and anachronism of capital expressed in its acutest form. And they do not understand this.

The ways of escape from the *petit bourgeois* world are many. One way is to shed one's false bourgeois illusions and relapse into the proletarian hell one has always dreaded. Then one finds a life hard and laborious enough but with clear values, derived from the functional part one plays in society. The peculiarly dreadful flavour of *petit bourgeois* bitterness is gone, for now the social forces that produce unhappiness—unemployment, poverty and privation—come quite clearly from above, from outside, from an alien world. One encounters them as members of a class, as companions in misfortune, and this generates both the sympathy and the organisation that makes them easier to be sustained. 'It's the poor what helps the poor.' The proletariat are called upon to hate, not each other but impersonal things like wars and slumps and booms, or classes outside themselves—the bosses, the rich.

It is the peculiar suffering of the *petit bourgeoisie* that they are called upon to hate *each other*. It is not impersonal things or *outside* classes that hurt them and inflict on them suffering and poverty, but it appears to be other members of their own class. It is the shopkeeper across the road, the rival small trader, the family next door, with whom they are actively competing. Every success of one *petit bourgeois* is a sword in another's

heart. Every failure of one's own is the result of another's activity. No companionship, or solidarity, is possible. One's hatred extends from the workers 'below' that abyss always waiting for one, to the successful *petit bourgeois* just above one whom one envies and hates.

The development of capitalism increases both trends, the solidarity of the workers and the dissension and bitterness of the *petit bourgeoisie*.

It is also possible to escape upwards. Many are called. All who do not sink into the proletariat strive upwards. Only a few are chosen. Only a few struggle into the ranks of the rich bourgeoisie. Wells was one of those few. The story of this sharp, fierce struggle and its ultimate success in terms of his bank passbook is recorded in Wells's Autobiography.

Some try to escape into the world of art or pure thought. But this 'escape' becomes increasingly difficult. Take the case of the artist in the young Wells's position. A dominating interest in art will come to him perhaps as an interest in poetry, in the short story, in new novelist's technique. Painful and unproductive at first, his study of his craft will also be uneconomic. It will not pay. But how is he to live? Is he to proletarianise himself? Is he to starve in a garret on poor relief? But starvation in a garret as an outcast 'despised' member of the community will necessarily condition his whole outlook as an artist. He will write reacting with or against proletarianisation, or as an unsuccessful petty bourgeois, or as an enforced member of the *lumpen-*

*proletariat*, and all society will seem compulsive, rotten and inimical to him. Moreover, art itself in that era, being the aggregate of art produced by these and their like antecedent conditions, will be more and more out-cast, turned in on itself, non-functional, and subjective, it will be the sincere, decadent, anarchistic art of a Picasso or Joyce.

It was impossible for Wells, imbued with this burning desire, to escape from the petty bourgeois hell, to accept art as an avocation, a social rôle, and be driven in on himself as an outcast from bourgeois values. He could only accept it as a means to success and the best road to cash. His autobiography reveals the early stages of his struggles in the literary market to attain five-figure sales and a five-figure income.

It is probable that Wells had, naturally, a primarily artistic bent. His gift for vivid metaphor and the word used with a delight in its texture appears in welcome flashes amid oceans of turgid and shoddy thinking. But once having denied art as an avocation justified by its social utility in favour of art as a cash-producer justified by sales, the development of his writer's gift was stifled. No characters live in his novels except as transitory aspects of himself. The conflicts of his characters are unreal, their relationships unconvincing and non-progressive, the whole background and action is pervaded by a superficiality and shoddiness which Henry James analysed correctly. Wells has not created any art of importance, and his life spent in the petty bourgeois upward struggle has prevented him from getting into

touch with reality. No real contemporary problem is ever the theme of his novels. Doubtless this explains the appeal to his mind of the scientific fantasy, with which alone—and then only in his youth—he achieves any measure of artistic success.

There was also the escape into the world of 'pure' thought. But the scientist is faced with the same kind of problem as the artist, although only now has it become as acute. One can fasten oneself to thought, but then how, speculating, is one to live by speculating? The problem will affect one's thought, by one's isolation and inability to obtain the apparatus and assistance for experiments.

Alternatively one can find work as a thinker and bring one's scientific capabilities to the cash market. Here bourgeoisdom is kinder to science than to art, for science is more often profitable to it. There are posts where the thinker is paid merely to think. But these are few and already growing fewer. Most scientists must live on patents, armament research, and teaching. Bourgeoisdom warns them severely that science is growing a nuisance; there is over-production, 'there should be a close period for invention'.

As it happened, Wells tried this way of escape also. He studied under Huxley. Rightly or wrongly, he believes he would have made a good scientist. But once again the necessity of escaping from petty bourgeois poverty stepped in. He became a demonstrator in order to be able to afford to marry, and presently was writing articles for the popular press. His possible

scientific career was blocked by the necessity of 'keeping up' a wife and home.

But these experiences of his in his escape into wealth, necessarily taught him all the difficulties and all the frustrations of his class in their acutest form. His books are full of pity for the typical *petit bourgeois*—'poor dear muddled' So-and-so, solitary, discontented, ambitious, subject to blind forces. He is unable to overcome his *petit bourgeois* reverence for the big bourgeois—the Roosevelt, the far-seeing capitalist visualised as a *Samurai*. And he is unable even to imagine what workers are like. As he acknowledges, he does not know them, has not talked to them, cannot understand them. All he has of them is childhood memories of the proletarian abyss below the *petit bourgeois*, the dreadful Morlocks whom one must kill blindly when revolting they come up to the light of day.

This means that Wells's world is unreal. The whole world of modern society derives its energy and character from the interplay between the bourgeois and the workers. The *petit bourgeoisie*, the only class Wells understands, is simply the dust flung off by the impact of these two forces. Therefore it is impossible for him to grasp what is happening in the world to-day. Everything seems mysterious, arbitrary, frustrated. But because he has climbed into bourgeois security he must always without realising what he is doing identify himself with bourgeois interests. He must crusade for Imperialism in the War, for liberal Fascism and a New Deal during peace. He must always loathe all signs of the



arising of the Morlocks, and crusade relentlessly against Marx or any Socialism that admits the existence of classes, that is 'ungracious' or 'bitter'. Classes are mere fictions, he tells us, due to our deluding ourselves with 'personæ' and myths. Thus Wells understands the world less than the crudest hard-fisted capitalist, who knows clearly what he stands for and with whom he is fighting.

Since contemporary conditions not only hurt and frustrated Wells in his upwards struggle from the *petit bourgeoisie*, but forced him also to trample on such longings as he may have had for art or science, Wells necessarily took a critical attitude towards these conditions, and equally necessarily, because he did not understand them, could only criticise them with irresponsibility and constantly changing opinions. He took the rôle of popular 'thinker', writer of the novel 'of ideas' and of 'outlines' of science and history, because he had been unable to pursue real art and had been forced to forsake real science. He could not be creative, for creation is the prerogative of the man who is real artist or real scientist. Necessarily therefore he became the great *entrepreneur* of modern and not-so-modern theories. Although lately science and history have left him behind, he was able to use all the discoveries of, say, 1890 to 1910—psycho-analysis, early anthropology and comparative religion, archæology, physics and biology. But because he was devoid of any world-view and had not escaped from the inborn bewilderment of the *petit bourgeois*, he can make nothing but a muddle of all these ideas—an

eclectic mish-mash. The subtlest and acutest hypothesis in his hands somehow becomes clumsy and shoddy. Science's most vital discoveries recounted by him seem grey and linen-draperish. Can there ever have been a man accepted seriously as a thinker, who showed so little capacity not merely for original but even for clear and logical thought? Wells might have occupied a position similar to that of the Encyclopædists. But the Encyclopædists were bourgeois in an age of bourgeois revolution. They belonged to the dynamic force of society. They were part of its structure, one of the vital levers in the machine, not like Wells part of what is not even a dying class but the fluff broken off that class in its operation. Therefore these Encyclopædists had a perfectly clear and definite world-view. It was a real world they lived in, and whose structure they knew from inside. All the contemporary discoveries they popularised were fitted into a coherent real frame. Wells had nothing in which to fit them; hence the characteristic Wellsian muddle.

It is a strange and in a way pathetic illusion this of Wells, that by forsaking art, science and action for 'propaganda', he can change the world. We can see its genesis, how it arose necessarily from the circumstances of his ascent from the *petit bourgeois* hell and his abandonment of science and art. It takes shape in the typical bourgeois error, the error that thought is prior and moves the world and that if only people would see reason (while the capitalist machine remorselessly constrains their every movement) they would act rightly.

Wells sees—as must every man of even normal intelligence, and Wells is a man of more than that—on the one hand the hopeless confusion of bourgeois social relations, and on the other hand that society's productive forces, in the form of physics (science) and machinery (technical resources), contain enormous potency which can only be realised in different social relations.

But the proletariat does not exist for Wells. The change therefore can only come from within the bourgeois class. The task of 'setting right' the world becomes one of showing the bourgeoisie their errors. The world is to be set right by argument. But the very fact that he thinks this indicates that he himself has no rational basis on which to argue, that he is intellectually one with those he wishes to convert. He does not see that the principle of causality involves that bourgeois social relations have not only given birth to enormous powers and the possibility of their own destruction, but also to all the irrationalities of ideology which reflect the same confusion. He assumes on the contrary that the concepts lying naturally in his mind were not formed by his education and his environment, but are God-given concepts of absolute justice and truth, a spark of the undying fire. He supposed instead that the muddle-headedness, ignorance, blindness, wickedness, wastefulness, and militancy of men that he saw around him had produced the muddled world of economic, politic, and social relations, as if men had not been born with blank minds and educated in the world but had stepped suddenly on the earth and by a fiat of their wills had

produced the sad picture. It is the old bourgeois error of knowing producing being, of the freedom and primacy of thought. As always, man's will is believed free in itself, and not only in so far as it creates conditions which realise its freedom. The historical outline which made Wells famous is not defective, as bourgeois historians assert, because of its neglect of this or that fact, its minor inaccuracies, its cavalier treatment of 'great men', its 'new' interpretation of policies. On the contrary, never was a better miniature bourgeois history written than this Outline. There are no classes. Wars are caused by men's identification of themselves with tribal gods such as Britannia and Kathleen in Houlihan. The Outline is notable for its complete lack of any causal presentation of historical development, so that man's enthralling and noble history, so rich in content, so tense with effort, so perpetually new in quality and process, seems nothing but a nightmare of ideological futility, in which unreasonable kings and unscientific statesmen and well-meaning religious leaders lead their unfortunate followers in a will-o'-the-wisp dance—a gloomy scene, relieved only by the shrill voice of Wells's angry preaching.

Wells makes the old bourgeois assumption that men are born, each perfectly free, and that their wants and dreams mould the world of social relations, not that the world of social relations moulds their wants and dreams, which in turn react upon the world of social relations to produce a continual process of historical development. Because of this Wells naturally makes the 'logical'

deduction that to change man's mind it is necessary to preach to them convincingly and interestingly, and then all will be accomplished as one desires. Moreover, since he assumes that the relation between mind and environment is perfectly fluid, that the mind can make of the environment anything it pleases, he quite logically considers as his primary task the drawing up of a completely planned Utopia, including details of drainage, morals, and election methods, so that this planned Utopia can by his converted readers be brought into being. And because this Utopia is planned in minute detail, according to the best ideals of the bourgeoisie on the particular day on which he is writing, he has the ludicrous illusion that this is scientific socialism and (actually) that Marxism is unscientific. Wells's 'science' requires as its first step the substitution for all laws of causality of the free operation of the mind, and it is characteristic of his completely bourgeois mentality that he does not see this and does not even understand the principles on which his theories are based. It is doubtful if Wells has ever realised, in spite of his scientific education, that the whole purpose of Marx was to write history causally. Social development may, as in the bourgeois world, be *apparently* governed by the blind forces of 'nature' producing slumps and wars, or as in communism it may be governed increasingly by the conscious and therefore planned forces of society; but in both cases there is a causal relation beneath phenomena. It is because the bourgeois denies causality as Wells does in his Outline, and because the Communist

asserts it, and discovers its law, that man in communism can become free. To deny the existence of laws, as the savage denies the existence of physical causality by substituting mythology, is to be the slave of those laws. To assert or discover them, as does the scientist, is to be their master.

In these latter days Wells can see small hope for our troubled world. What hope can exist within the circle of the ideas that rule his mind—since they are bourgeois ideas? Only two alternatives exist to-day within the bourgeois class, collapse or Fascism, and both are ultimately the same. All Wells's Utopian dreams of the future turn more and more on these two alternatives—on the one hand a New Deal, a State run by Samurai, a giant ultra-Imperialistic democratic world-state as the result of an open conspiracy—on the other hand, as in the *Shape of Things to Come*, complete collapse with the vague faith that somehow in some unspecified way, in some remote corner, the problems have all been miraculously solved and a Redeemer arrives from this Utopia in a glittering aeroplane to put things right from above, like a divine bureaucrat.

In all these Utopias thought reveals its solitary poverty. Thought visualising the future and divorced from action, can do no more than project the disheartening poverty of the present into the richness of the future. These bourgeois dream-Utopias with their standardisations, their extinction of national distinctions so dear to the heart of human beings, their characterless, commercialised, hygienic, eugenic, Aryan-Fascist uni-

formity, not only do not allure us—they revolt our minds. If the future holds no more than this, we think, let civilisation die. They hold us back and discourage us, rather than urge us on. But the lesson of history tells us that it is not so. Thought is not here to be trusted. Thought is static so long as it treads only thought's round and, like a metaphysical logician, cannot bring to birth newness or greater complexity, but only a re-shuffling of those elements it already held, given it afore-time by action in experience. It is action that is rich and creative ; being is perpetually contriving new patterns and higher complexities. Action is more mysterious than that unmysterious word mystery, more varied and enchanting than that Utopia which, like a Christian Paradise, either repeats the sensual delights of the present or takes refuge in negatives—' tongue cannot say or heart conceive '. Action is the process of development itself and brings into birth what our limited thoughts cannot to-day conceive, and by doing so makes possible those richer thoughts we would long to think but cannot, those dreams we only dream of having. Is thought then utterly vain, a chance iridescence on the seething tumult of the sea of being ? No, for thought *is* being, is a part of being, developed historically as part of action to aid that action which we regard as primary, which action in turn casts fresh light on being. At every stage thought must find issue from action and, with what it has learned from action, return to fresh thinking, which again goes out to fresh action. Thus the boundaries of the known and influenced world perpetually widen,

while its image in consciousness perpetually deepens and grows in complexity. This is the law of development, not only of science but of all thought whatever. The function of thought is not to shuffle its stale concepts into some fresh might-have-been world and expect action to follow suit, but to probe deep into the world of being, lay bare its causal structure, and draw from that causal structure the possibilities of future being. Man has already done this with physics, where, by knowing the necessities of dead matter, we are free of them and can subdue them within the limits of those laws to our own will. The same baring of causal structure was performed by Marx in the sphere of society, where, by exposing the principal laws of motion of bourgeois social relations, he has shown how thought can follow the grain thus revealed. Thought following the grain of social relations can, by action, by social revolution, make man fully conscious of himself as a man and plan society to achieve his own freedom. Thus while the Utopians project their unsatisfied aspirations into the future and expect being to conform, how they know not, the scientific socialist is concerned to find what defect in contemporary social relations has given birth to his aspirations, and to what new system of social relations, generated step by step out of the present, this symptom points. But as for what this world will be when social relations no longer press on man blindly but he is truly free—how can we children of a collapsing world, in all the ruin wrought by our outworn social relations, ourselves *exactly* predict?



Thus thought by remembering its integrity with being, whereby thought acquires a history and change and returns on the rest of action to enrich and guide it, gains the power it possesses only in bourgeois theory and in bourgeois use seems not to possess. In bourgeois theory thought is free of necessity and in bourgeois practice is therefore helpless in the face of necessity. In Marxist theory thought is conscious of necessity and is therefore free. Wells, believing that thought and consciousness are prime movers, has spent his whole life in 'popularising' his absolute truth and justice, in making them bright and attractive and vivid and easily digestible. He has been read 'by millions', but simply because of that his work has been a vain beating of the wind, for his very appeal to millions resulted from this, that his readers like himself were caught in the same round of bourgeois metaphysics, of thought eternally returning on itself and finding no outlet in action or connexion with reality. Yet Marx, who made no concessions to popular appeal and never attempted to make his doctrine 'attractive', who preached the subservience of thought to social necessity and wasted no time in planning beautiful Utopias—it is this Marx who appears to have shaken the bourgeois world. It is Marx's writing which appears to have overturned the government of one-sixth of a world and established a new order. It is Marx whose ideas in the remaining five-sixths are always the spear-point of social action and form the rallying point for the active forces of revolution in all countries. No one has moved into

action behind the banner of Wells. If indeed thought alone moves the world 'of its own right' independent of its connexion with being, how is it that Marx's ideas, explained with so little 'propaganda', such lack of emotional appeal, prettiness and fantasy, so destitute of poetry and sex-appeal, appear to have conquered reality? All unconsciously, a bourgeois critic of Marx has grasped the truth. Marx, he said, has not produced revolutionary activity anywhere. It is the revival of revolutionary activity which has 'revived and re-inflated' Marx. And this is true. The tremendous power of Marx's ideology is drawn, not from the form of that ideology but from the content of contemporary social relations. Marx, instead of voyaging into the future on a Time-Machine to find his own *petit bourgeois* ideas symbolised in Morlocks and Eloi, pierced into the heart of contemporary capitalist being and escaped from bourgeois ideology into the structure of bourgeois society. By exhibiting in his writings the causal laws he thus discovered, he also made possible the machinery of revolution which would change social relations by action, just as a scientist's discovery of a physical law permits the construction of machines to produce at will the phenomena generalised in the law. Marx's ideology has behind it all the pressure of the social forces of our age. Each slump, each war, every new business transaction, every concentration of capital, every fresh exploitation, every second of the development of bourgeois social relations, adds fresh force to the ideology of Marx, and as frosts break up a ground,

prepares our minds, long tranced in the aridity of bourgeois thought, for the dawning consciousness of tomorrow.

It is Wells's tragedy that of all contemporaries who have interested themselves in social change and seen the anarchy of current social relations, he is least a Socialist and farthest from Marxism. And this, in its turn, is due to his *petit bourgeois* mind.

The bourgeois, as soon as he becomes disgusted with the muddle and decay of his own class, necessarily turns to the proletariat, and since he has only been taught to regard them as inferior brutes, he is able to turn to them with pity, as one turns to animals. He is able to regard them as the most suffering class, and this pity for the proletariat as the most suffering class burns brightly in the writings of Wassermann, Toller, Tolstoy, and Barbusse, and even warms faintly Shaw and Galsworthy. There is no trace of it in Wells, for Wells comes from a class that regards the proletariat not as passive inferior brutes but as something dirty and evil and dangerous and terribly near. Because he has been so busy getting upwards out of the petty bourgeois hell, Wells has never had time to become conscious of this limitation or learn the truth.

The conception of the proletariat as the most suffering class fills the disgusted bourgeois with indignation and passion. It becomes a source of emotion and humanity, well seen in Wassermann's *Christian Wahnschaffe*, that prevents such a man's writings from ever having the unreality or emotional aridity of Wells's.

They may burst into white flames of fury at the sufferings of the proletariat, as in Christian Wahnschaffe's cry to his father :

'The guilt that arises from what men do is small and scarcely comparable to the guilt that arises from what men fail to do. For what kinds of men are those, after all, who become guilty through their deeds? Poor, wretched, driven, desperate, half-mad creatures, who lift themselves up and bite the foot that treads them under. Yet they are made responsible and held guilty and punished with endless torments. But those who are guilty through failure in action are spared and are always secure, and have ready and reasonable subterfuges and excuses, yet they are, so far as I can see, the true criminals. All evil comes from them.'

Wells could never see his 'Morlocks' as Wassermann sees them, as 'poor, wretched, driven, desperate, half-mad creatures'. He could never burn with indignation and be restless at the thought of the proletariat 'Under Fire', exploited, transported to Siberia, always and everywhere the most suffering class.

And yet what leagues and leagues the bourgeois has yet to travel, even when arrived at this realisation of the proletariat as the most suffering class, before he can understand the reality of the society in which he finds himself! For he has to understand that this most suffering and exploited class, this herd of ill-treated animals, is something very different, the sole creative force of contemporary society. This class which he comes to

comfort and set free and relieve, has on the contrary the task of comforting and releasing and reviving him. These sufferers afflicted by war and capitalist anarchy and slumps are to fight and destroy these very evils. The world of his youth whose ruins he sees tumbling on them, is to be rebuilt and more largely planned by them. This humiliating knowledge, which can only be won against his instincts, by an insight into the structure of the social relations in which he lives, is the most difficult of all wisdoms for the bourgeois to attain. Wells is a hundred miles from it. A long dispersed array of dragged pilgrims filed along the road to the revolution of thought and being. Only a few bourgeois have yet arrived there.

## V

# PACIFISM AND VIOLENCE

### A STUDY IN BOURGEOIS ETHICS

THERE is not much left of importance in bourgeois ethics. Chastity, sobriety, salvation and cleanliness have ceased to be topics on which the bourgeois feels very deeply. There is, in fact, only one issue on which the bourgeois conscience is to-day warmed into activity. Pacifism, always latent in the bourgeois creed, has now crystallised out as almost the only emotionally-charged belief left in Protestant Christianity or in its analogue, bourgeois 'idealism'.

I call it a distinctively bourgeois doctrine, because I mean by pacifism, not the love of peace as a good to be secured by a definite form of action, but the belief that any form of social constraint of others or any violent action is in itself wrong, and that violence such as War must be *passively* resisted because to use violence to end violence would be logically self-contradictory. I oppose pacifism in this sense to the Communist belief that the only way to secure peace is by a revolutionary change in the social system, and that ruling classes resist revolution violently and must therefore be overthrown by force.

But modern war is also distinctively bourgeois. Struggles such as the last war arise from the unequal Imperialist development of the bourgeois powers, and earlier wars of bourgeois culture were also fought for aims characteristic of bourgeois economy or, like the wars of the infant Dutch republic, represented the struggles of the growing bourgeois class against feudal forces. In its last stage of Fascism, when capitalism, throwing off the democratic forms which no longer serve its purpose, rules with open violence, bourgeois culture is also seen as aggressively militant. Are we Marxists then simply using labels indiscriminately when we class as characteristically bourgeois, both militancy *and* pacifism, meekness *and* violence ?

No, we are not doing so, if we can show that we call bourgeois not all war and not all pacifism but only certain types of violence, and only certain types of non-violence ; and if, further, we can show how the one fundamental bourgeois position generates both these apparently opposed viewpoints. We did the same thing when we showed that two philosophies which are apparently completely opposed—mechanical materialism and idealism—were both characteristically bourgeois, and both generated by the one bourgeois assumption.

Bourgeois pacifism is distinctive and should not be confused, for example, with Eastern pacifism, any more than modern European warfare should be confused with feudal warfare. It is not merely that the social manifestations of it are different—this would necessarily

arise from the different social organs of the two cultures. But the content also is different. Anyone who supposes that bourgeois pacifism will, for example, take the form of a University Anti-War Group lying down on the rails in front of a departing troop train like an Indian pacifist group, is to be ignorant of the nature of bourgeois pacifism and of whence it took its colour. The historic example of bourgeois pacifism is not Gandhi but Fox. The Society of Friends expresses the spirit of bourgeois pacifism. It is individual resistance.

To understand how bourgeois pacifism arises, we must understand how bourgeois violence arises. It arises, just as does feudal or despotic violence, from the characteristic economy of the system. As was first explained by Marx, the characteristics of bourgeois economy are that the bourgeois, held down and crippled productively by the feudal system, comes to see freedom and productive growth in lack of social organisation, in every man's administering his own affairs for his own benefit to the best of his ability and desire, and this is expressed in the absolute character of bourgeois property together with its complete alienability. His struggle to achieve this right did secure his greater freedom and productive power as compared with his position in the feudal system. The circumstances of the struggle and its outcome gave rise to the bourgeois dream—freedom as the absolute elimination of social relations.

But such a programme, if carried into effect, would mean the end of society and the break-down of econo-



mic production. Each man would struggle for himself, and if he saw another man with something he wanted, he would seize it, for by assumption no such social relations as co-operation exist. The saving and foresight which makes economic production possible would cease to exist. Man would become a brute.

But in fact the bourgeois had no desire for such a world. He lived by merchandising and banking, by *capital* as opposed to the land which was the basis of feudal exploitation. Therefore he meant by the 'absence of social restraints', the absence of any restraint on his ownership, alienation, or acquisition at will of the capital by which he lived. Private property is a social 'restraint', for others not owning it are 'restrained' from helping themselves to it by force or cunning, as they could in a 'state of nature'; but the bourgeois never included the ownership of capital as one of the social restraints that should be abolished, for the simple reason that it was not to him a restraint at all. It never therefore entered his head to regard it as such, and he saw nothing inconsistent in calling for the abolition of privilege, monopoly, and so forth, while hanging on to his capital.

Moreover, he had a cogent argument which, when he became more self-conscious, he could use. A social restraint is a social relation, that is, a relation between men. The relation between master and slave is a social relation and therefore a restraint on the liberty of one man by the other. In the same way the relation between lord and serf is a relation between men and a restraint

on human liberty ; but the relation between a man and his property is a relation between man and a thing, and is therefore no restraint on the liberty of other men.

This argument was of course fallacious, for there can be no universal relations of this kind as the fabric of society, there can only be relations between men disguised as relations between things. The bourgeois defence of private property only applies if I go out into the woods and pick up a stick to walk with, or fashion an ornamental object for my adornment ; it applies to the possession of socially unimportant trifles or things for immediate consumption. As soon as bourgeois possession extends to the capital of the community, consisting of the products of the community set aside to produce goods in the future (in early bourgeois civilisation, grain, clothes, seed and raw materials to supply the labourers of to-morrow, and in addition machinery and plant for the same purpose to-day), this relation to a thing becomes a relation among men, for it is now the labour of the community which the bourgeois controls. The bourgeois right of private property leads to this, that on the one hand the world and all that society has created in it belongs to the bourgeois, and on the other hand stands the naked labourer, who is forced by the needs of his body to sell his labour-power to the bourgeois in order to feed himself and his master. The bourgeois will only buy his labour-power, if he makes a profit from it. This social relation is only made possible by—it *depends on*—the bourgeois ownership of capital. Thus, just as in slave-

owning or serf-owning civilisation there is a relation between men which is a relation between a dominating and a dominated class, or between exploiters and exploited ; so there is in bourgeois culture, but whereas in earlier civilisations this relation between men is conscious and clear, in bourgeois culture it is disguised as a system free from obligatory dominating relations between men and containing only innocent relations between men and a thing.

Therefore, in throwing off all social restraint, the bourgeois seemed to himself justified in retaining this one restraint of private property, for it did not seem to him a restraint at all, but an inalienable right of man, the fundamental natural right. Unfortunately for this theory, there are no natural rights, only situations found in nature, and private property protected for one man by others is not one of them. Bourgeois private property could only be protected by coercion—the *have-nots* had to be coerced by the *haves* after all, just as in feudal society. Thus a dominating relation as violent as in slave-owning civilisations came into being, expressed in the police, the laws, the standing army, and the legal apparatus of the bourgeois State. The whole bourgeois State revolves round the coercive protection of private property, alienable and acquirable by trading for private profit, and regarded as a natural right, but a right which, strangely enough, can only be protected by coercion, because it involves of its essence a right to dispose of and extract profit from the labour-power of others, and so administer their lives.

Thus, after all, the bourgeois dream of liberty cannot be realised. Social restraints must come into being to protect this one thing that makes him a bourgeois. This 'freedom' to own private property seems to him inexplicably to involve more and more social restraints, laws, tariffs, and factory acts; and this 'society' in which only relations to a thing are permitted becomes more and more a society in which relations between men are elaborate and cruel. The more he aims for bourgeois freedom, the more he gets bourgeois restraint, for bourgeois freedom is an illusion.

Thus, just as much as in slave-owning society, bourgeois society turns out to be a society built on violent coercion of men by men, the more violent in that while the master must feed and protect his slave, whether he works or not, the bourgeois employer owns no obligation to the free labourer, not even to find him work. The whole bourgeois dream explodes in practice, and the bourgeois state becomes a theatre of the violent and coercive subjection of man to man for the purposes of economic production.

For the purposes of economic production. Unlike the violence of the footpad, the violence of the bourgeois though similar in motive plays a social rôle. It is the relation whereby social production is secured in bourgeois society, just as the master-to-slave relation secures production in a slave-owning civilisation. It is for its epoch the best method of securing production, and it is better to be a slave than a beast of the jungle, better to be an exploited labourer than a slave, not be-

cause the bourgeois employer is ' nicer ' than the slave-owner (he is often a good deal crueller), but because the wealth of society as a whole is more with the former relation than the latter.

But no system of relations is static, it develops and changes. Slave-owning relations develop into Empires and then reveal their internal contradictions. They collapse. The story of the collapse of the Roman Empire is the story of the constant decline of the taxable wealth of the Empire between Augustus and Justinian as a result of increasing exploitation until, a poverty-stricken shell, it crumbled before the assaults of the barbarian, up till then easily repelled. In the same way, feudal civilisation, exhausted in England by the anarchy of the Wars of the Roses, collapsed. But not this time, before an external enemy ; it fell before an internal enemy, the rising bourgeois class.

Bourgeois relations, too, developed. In the famous bourgeois booms and slumps, they show the potential decay of the system. This decay was retarded by Imperialism, that is, by forcibly imposing on other countries the ' natural rights ' of the bourgeois. In these backward countries the bourgeois right to trade profitably and to alienate and acquire any property was forcibly imposed. Here too the bourgeois, out of his dominating relation to a thing, secretly imposed his dominating relation over men, which can yet be disguised as democracy, for does not democracy declare that all men are equal and none may enslave the other ? Does it not exclude all relations of domination—

despotism, slave-owning, feudal privilege—except the ‘innocent’ domination of capitalist over ‘free’ labourer?

But in this imperialising, a new situation arose—*external* war instead of *internal* violence and coercion. For now, in exploiting backward countries, or, it was called, ‘civilising’ them, one bourgeois State found itself competing with another, just as inside the State bourgeois competes with bourgeois.

But inside the State bourgeois competes with bourgeois peacefully, because it is the law—and this law was established for their own protection against the exploited. The laws forbidding one bourgeois to seize another’s property by force arose as the result of the need to prevent the have-nots seizing property by force. It is an internal law, the law of the coercive State. If it had not been necessary for the existence of the whole bourgeois class for them to be protected against the seizing of their property by the exploited, the law against the forcible seizure of private property, coercively enforced and taught to the exploited as a ‘necessary’ law of society, would never have come into existence. For the individualistic, competitive nature of bourgeois trade (each ‘getting the better’ of the other) is such that no bourgeois sees anything wrong in impoverishing another bourgeois. If he is ‘bust’ or ‘hammered’—well, it’s the luck of the game. But all unite as a class against the exploited, for the existence of the class depends on this. If it is a case of a battle royal *inside* the bourgeois class, each bourgeois believes by nature

and education that, given an equal chance, he will get the better of the other. This eternal optimism of the bourgeois is seen in the historic bourgeois appeals for 'fair-play', 'fair field and no favour', and all the other allied bourgeois slogans which express the ethics of the 'sporting' English gentleman.

It is quite different when the bourgeois States, through their coercive organisations, find themselves competing in the world arena for the backward lands. There is now no numerous exploited class menacing the existence of the class of bourgeois States *as a whole*. *Inside* the coercive State, if it came to a 'show-down', with street-fighting, bare hands, and man against man—the exploited would win. But in the Imperialistic arena the bourgeois States appear as highly developed organisms, for, thanks to the unification of the coercive State they now dispose of all the resources of an advanced society, including the services, in the army, of the exploited class itself. The backward nations still play inside the world arena the rôle of the exploited class inside the State, but they are not a danger to the class of bourgeois States as a whole, as is the exploited class to the class of bourgeois as a whole inside the State. They are just inanimate things, almost defenceless, so much dead undeveloped territory.

There is then no world danger threatening the class of bourgeois States as a whole, as, in a State, revolution threatens the class of bourgeois as a whole. There is only individual competition among bourgeois States and, as we have seen, the bourgeois never minds this

All he asks for is 'fair field and no favour' and he is certain that he will come out on top. He feels no need for a law to restrain competition among bourgeois. Hence the sovereign bourgeois State comes into being and battles bloodily with other bourgeois States for the booty of the backward territory. This is the age of Imperialism, culminating in the Great War.

Needless to say, the bourgeois finds the bourgeois dream—'a fair field and no favour'—when realised for the first time, far bloodier and more violent than he dreamed. War presently comes to seem to him 'unfair competition'. Like a price-cutting war, it alarms him and he feels someone from outside ought to stop it. He calls for aid; but there is no one 'outside'. For to whom, on heaven or earth, can he call, as a member of the class of independent *sovereign* States?

Still he has a dream. If the class of bourgeois in *one* country can have a State and police force enforcing order and non-violent competition, why not a State of States, a world-State, in which world peace is enforced?

This bourgeois hope perpetually recurs in the chaos of war, and the League of Nations is one form of it. But the one factor which secures internal law in the bourgeois State—the existence of a dangerous exploited class—does not exist in the *world* arena. No danger confronts the class of bourgeois States *as a whole*, and thus they can never unite to accept a coercive regulating law superior to their own wills. The danger only exists as among themselves and each, like a good bourgeois, believes that, by appropriate 'combination',



treaty-making, and manœuvring, he can best the others. The bourgeois dream of a peaceful Imperialism is unrealisable for want of a danger common to all bourgeois States to unite them. After a bitter experience of the unpleasantness of war, as after a bitter experience of the unpleasantness of price-cutting, they can unite in a voluntary cartel, the League of Nations, but like a cartel it lacks the cohesion and coercive power of the bourgeois State and therefore lacks also its efficiency in mediating between bourgeois. It is like a price agreement to which all voluntarily adhere for their own individual benefit. Since, in bourgeois production in general, and Imperialist exploitation in particular, an agreement cannot work always for the good of all, it is only a matter of time before the cartel is denounced by some and we see the *have-not* bourgeois States (Germany and Italy) are outside the cartel, and arrayed against the *haves* (France and England), while that bourgeois State (America) whose interests do not lie in the same sphere of Imperialist exploitation, has never joined the cartel. Thus in spite of the bitterest lessons possible to a nation, proving the inefficiency of war as a palliative of slump, it is not possible for States whose forms coercively express bourgeois interests to acknowledge a superior co-ordinating force, which would produce in the international sphere legal machinery like that securing internal order in the State, for this internal machinery is directed against the dangerous exploited class, and in the international sphere there is no dangerous exploited class. Thus the peaceful World

Federation of States, the League, becomes part of the bourgeois illusion, and the nations arm themselves still more heavily.

Could not Russia, as a proletarian State, furnish the equivalent in the international sphere of the exploited class, and force the independent bourgeois States to unite and crush her? This was the Trotsky nightmare, from which it followed that Socialism could not be established anywhere without a world revolution. But this theory overlooked the fact that Soviet Russia is not an exploited State. An exploited class, in a bourgeois State, is a class held up to ransom by the bourgeois, who hold the means of production in their hands. It is a case of: 'Work for us or die.' Such a situation can only be maintained by moral and physical coercion and therefore bourgeois 'rights' have to be maintained in this way perpetually; otherwise men would not naturally tolerate a situation where their very means of livelihood were in another's hands and could be only secured if they generated profit for that other. But in Russia this class has expropriated their expropriators. It is not a case of working for other bourgeois States or dying; the Russian workers are their own masters. Moreover, unlike other bourgeois States, there are no internal contradictions in their economy (accumulation of capital) forcing them to seek new fields of exploitation.

Russia appears, therefore, in the world arena, to the bourgeois States, not as an exploited class inherently dangerous but as an ordinary internally ordered coercive

State—‘one of themselves’. She competes with them in open world markets but, for reasons that do not concern them, does not seek backward countries on which to impose Imperialist exploitation. She can therefore join their cartel. In this cartel her duty is to join the bourgeois game—playing one alliance off against another—not to gain Imperialistic advantage but in order to secure peace for herself and for the unfortunate proletariat of the bourgeois States.

It is true that Russia is a danger to all bourgeois States in that her success is an inspiration to a proletarian revolution in every State. But the world proletarian revolution means the end of bourgeois economy, and this, to the bourgeois, is at first simply ludicrous. On the one hand he tells himself that Bolshevism is only a ‘passing phase’, and, on the other hand, that in modern Soviet Russia there is simply ‘planned capitalism’. Moreover, the proletarian revolution will not come from Russia, it will come from inside, and it would therefore be pointless to attempt to stop, say, the British proletariat from rising by attacking Russia. On the contrary, such a move would hasten the very event that is dreaded. Thus, although the bourgeois States denounce Russia, they cannot be united in one common attack on her, but instead are ready to enter into pacts with her, to use her against each other.

That is not to say Russia is not in danger. On the contrary, all bourgeois States are in danger from each other in so far as they represent possible fields of Imperialistic exploitation. In this respect Russia is in

as much danger from Germany as Britain from Germany. It is therefore necessary for her to arm herself as heavily as her bourgeois neighbours and try to strengthen herself by pacts, the international equivalent of cartels and trade agreements.

Only when the bourgeois begins to see the inevitability of Communism does he begin to regard Russia as a greater danger than any other bourgeois State. But this realisation is just what causes the capitalist class to resort to Fascism and therefore the Fascist States constitute the main danger to Russia to-day.

. . . . .

This, then, is the analysis of bourgeois violence. It is not like something that descends from heaven for a time to madden the human race. It is implicit in the bourgeois illusion.

The whole bourgeois economy is built on the violent domination of men by men through the private possession of social capital. It is always there, waiting ready at any moment to flame out in a Peterloo or an Amritsar within the bourgeois State, or a Boer War or Great War outside it.

As long as the bourgeois economy remains a positive constructive force, that violence is hidden. Society does not contain a powerful internal pressure until productive forces have outgrown the system of productive relations. Until this revolutionary pressure develops, it is therefore for coercion to show itself bloodily or on a wide scale.

But when bourgeois economy is riven by its own

contradictions, when private profit is seen to be public harm, when poverty and unemployment grow in the midst of the means of plenty, bourgeois violence becomes more open. These contradictions drive the bourgeois States to Imperialistic wars, in which violence reigns without a qualifying factor. Internally violence instead of 'reason' alone suffices to maintain the bourgeois system. Since the capitalistic system is openly proving its inefficiency, people are no longer content with a form of government, parliamentary democracy, in which economic production is run by the bourgeois class, leaving the people as a whole only the power to settle, within narrow limits, through Parliament, the apportionment of a merely administrative budget. They see this to be a sham, and see no reason to tolerate the sham. There is a growing demand for socialism, and the capitalist class where this grows pressing, resort to open violence. They use the revolt against ineffectual democracy to establish a dictatorship, and this dictatorship, which seizes power with the cry 'Down with Capitalism', in fact establishes capitalism still more violently, as in Fascist Italy and Germany. The brutal oppression and cynical violence of Fascism is the summit of bourgeois decline. The violence at the heart of the bourgeois illusion emerges inside as well as outside the State.

The justification of bourgeois violence is an important part of bourgeois ethics. The coercive control of social labour by a limited class is justified as a relation to a thing. Even as late as Hegel, this justification is given

quite naïvely and simply. Just as I go out and break off a stick of wood from the primitive jungle and convert it to my purpose, so the bourgeois is supposed to convert the thing 'capital' to his use. Domination over men is wicked; domination over things is legitimate.

The nature of bourgeois economy made it possible for Hegel to believe this seriously. But when the true nature of bourgeois economy had been analysed by Marx, as a dominating relation over men through ownership of the means of social labour and individual livelihood, how could this naïve bourgeois attitude persist? Only by vilifying Marx, by always attacking him violently without explaining his views, and by continuing to teach, preach and practise the old bourgeois theory. It was then that the bourgeois illusion became the bourgeois lie, a conscious deception festering at the heart of bourgeois culture.

Bourgeois ethics include the more difficult task of justification of the violence of bourgeois war. The Christian-bourgeois ethic has been equal even to this. Consonant to the bourgeois illusion, all interference with the liberty of another is wicked and immoral. If one is attacked in one's liberty, one is therefore compelled to defend outraged morality and attack in turn. All bourgeois wars are therefore justified by both parties as wars of defence. Bourgeois liberty includes the right to exercise all bourgeois occupations—alienating, trading, and acquiring for profit—and since these involve establishing dominating relations over others,

it is not surprising that the bourgeois often finds himself attacked in his liberty. It is impossible for the bourgeois to exercise his full liberty without infringing the liberty of another. It is impossible therefore to be thoroughly bourgeois and not give occasion for 'just' wars.

Meanwhile bourgeois discomforts generate an opposition to bourgeois violence. At each stage of bourgeois development men could be found who were impregnated with the bourgeois illusion, that man is free and happy only when without social restraints, and who yet found in bourgeois economy multiplying coercions and restraints. We saw why these exist ; the bourgeois economy requires coercion and restraint for its very life. The big bourgeois dominates the *petit bourgeois*, just as both dominate the proletariat. But these early bourgeois rebels could not see this. They demanded a return to the bourgeois dream—'equal rights for all', 'freedom from social restraints', the 'natural rights' of men. They thought that this would free them from the big bourgeoisie, and give them equal competition once again.

Thus originated the cleavage between conservatives and liberals, between the big bourgeois in possession and the little bourgeois wishing to be in possession. The one sees that his position depends on maintaining things as they are ; the other sees his as depending on more bourgeois freedom, more votes for all, more freedom for private property to be alienated, acquired, and owned, more free competition, less privilege.

The liberal is the active force. But so far from being

revolutionary, as he thinks, he is evolutionary. In striving for bourgeois freedom and fair competition he produces by this very action an increase in the social restraints he hates. He builds up the big bourgeoisie in trying to support the little, although he may make himself a big bourgeois in the process. He increases unfairness by trying to secure fairness. Free trade gives birth to tariffs, Imperialism and monopoly, because it is hastening the development of bourgeois economy, and these things are the necessary end of bourgeois development. He calls into being the things he loathes because, as long as he is in the grip of the bourgeois illusion that freedom consists in absence of social planning, he must put himself, by loosening social ties, more powerfully in the grip of coercive social forces.

This 'revolutionary' liberal, this hater of coercion and violence, this lover of free competition, this friend of liberty and human rights, is therefore the very man damned by history not merely to be powerless to stop these things, but to be forced by his own efforts to produce coercion and violence and unfair competition and slavery. He does not merely refrain from opposing bourgeois violence, he generates it, by helping on the development of bourgeois economy.

To-day, as the bourgeois pacifist, he helps to generate the violence, war, and Fascist and Imperialist brutality he hates. In so far as he is a genuine pacifist and not merely a completely muddled man hesitating between the paths of revolution and non-co-operation, his thesis is this, 'I hate violence and war and social oppression,



and all these things are due to social relations. I must therefore abstain from social relations. Belligerent and revolutionary alike are hateful to me.'

But to abstain from social relations, is to abstain from life. As long as he draws or earns an income, he participates in bourgeois economy, and upholds the violence which sustains it. He is in sleeping partnership with the big bourgeoisie, and that is the essence of bourgeois economy. If two other countries are at war, he is powerless to intervene and stop them, for that means social co-operation—social co-operation issuing in coercion, like a man separating quarrelling friends, and that action is by his definition barred to him. If the big bourgeoisie of his own country decide to go to war and mobilise the coercive forces, physical and moral, of the State, he can do nothing real, for the only real answer is co-operation with the proletariat to resist the coercive action of the big bourgeoisie and oust them from power. If Fascism develops, he cannot suppress it in the bud before it has built up an army to intimidate the proletariat, for he believes in 'free speech'. He can only watch the workers being bludgeoned and beheaded by the forces he allowed to develop.

His position rests firmly on the bourgeois fallacy. He thinks that man as an individual has power. He does not see that even in the unlikely event of everyone's taking his viewpoint and saying, 'I will passively resist,' his purpose will still not be achieved. For men cannot in fact cease to co-operate, because society's work must be carried on—grain must be reaped, clothes spun,

electricity generated or man will perish from the earth. Only his position as a member of a parasitic class could have given him any other illusion. A worker sees that his very life depends on economic co-operation and that this co-operation of itself imposes social relations which in bourgeois economy must be bourgeois, that is, must in greater or less measure give into the hands of the big bourgeoisie the violent issues of life and death. Passive resistance is not a real programme, but an apology for supporting the old programme. A man either participates in bourgeois economy, or he revolts and tries to establish another economy. Another apparent road is to break up society and return to the jungle, the solution of *anarchy*. But that is no solution at all. The only real alternative to bourgeois economy is proletarian economy, i.e. socialism, and therefore one either participates in bourgeois economy or is a proletarian revolutionary. The fact that one participates passively in bourgeois economy, that one does not oneself wield the bludgeon or fire the cannon, so far from being a defence really make one's position more disgusting, just as a fence is more unpleasant than a burglar, and a pimp than a prostitute. One lets others do the dirty work, and merely participates in the benefit. The bourgeois pacifist occupies perhaps the most ignoble place of a man in any civilisation. He is the Christian Protestant whose ethics have been made ridiculous by the development of the culture that evolved them ; but this does not prevent his deriving complacency from observing them. He sits on the

head of the worker and, while the big bourgeois kicks him, advises him to lie quiet. When (as did some pacifists during the general strike) he 'maintains essential services' during the 'violent' struggles of the proletariat for freedom, he becomes a portent.

Pacifism, for all its specious moral aspect, is, like Protestant Christianity, the creed of ultra-individualism and selfishness, just as Roman Catholicism is the creed of monopoly and privileged domination. This selfishness is seen in all the defences the bourgeois pacifist makes of his creed.

The first defence is that it is wrong. It is a 'sin' to slay or resort to violence. Christ forbids it. The pacifist who resorts to violence imbrues his soul with heinous guilt. In this conception nothing appears as important but the pacifist's own soul. It is this precious soul of his that he is worrying about, like the good bourgeoisie about her honour which is such an important social asset. Society can go to the devil if his soul is intact. So imbued is he with bourgeois notions of sin, that it never occurs to him that a preoccupation with one's own soul and one's own salvation is selfish. It may be that a man is right to save his own skin before all; that the pacifist above all must prevent the contamination of his precious soul by the mortal sin of violence. But what is this but the translation into spiritual terms of the good old bourgeois rule of *laissez-faire* and bourgeoisdom—May the devil take the hindmost? It is a spiritual *laissez-faire*. It is a belief that the interests of society—God's purpose—are best served by

not performing any action, however beneficial to others, if it would imperil one's own 'soul'. This is crystallised in the maxim, 'One may not do ill that good may come of it.'

Primitives have a more social conception of sin. Sin is reprehensible because it involves the whole tribe in danger. The sinner flees from the tribe because he has involved it in evil, not in order to save himself; he is damned by his sin. Going into the desert, he slays himself or is slain, thus lifting from the tribe, after it has performed appropriate purifications, the evil in which he has involved it. Both conceptions are bound in error, but this savage conception is nobler and more altruistic than the bourgeois conception in which each man is responsible solely for his own sins, and purifies them by a private resort to the blood of Christ. The pacifist has remembered the saying of Cain: 'Am I my brother's keeper?'

This tribal conception of salvation was partly retained in feudal society by the Church, which kept clearly in mind the unity of the Church Militant, the Church Suffering, and the Church Triumphant, each of which, by its prayers, could communicate with or help the others. The feudal Christian prayed for the Holy Souls suffering in Purgatory, expected those living to pray for him when dead, and continually called on the departed members of the tribe, the Triumphant Souls of the Saints in heaven, to help him, to such an extent that, in this strong social grouping, God was almost forgotten. The social unity alone emerges, and

individual sin becomes pardoned by the mere act of socialisation, in the confessional.

Thus Catholicism symbolised the social nature of feudalism ; the ' tribe ' was all Christendom. Its typical act was the Crusade, the violent assault of Christendom on paganism.

Protestantism, the religion of the bourgeoisie, necessarily revolted against tribal Catholicism. As a religion, it ' reformed ' all the social elements in Catholicism. It became Catholicism minus the social elements and plus individualism. Authority was abandoned ; the priest, the repository of the magic and conscience of the tribe was shorn of his power ; the prayers for the dead and to the saints were unindividualistic, therefore purgatory did not exist and the saints were helpless. Each man was to be his own judge, bear his own sin, and work out his own salvation. The notion of individual guilt, as in Bunyan and the Puritans, reached a pitch it had never achieved in Catholic countries. Hence too the new phenomena of ' conversion ', in which this intolerable self-induced burden of guilt is thrown into the bosom of Christ. For man cannot in fact live alone. This conversion was evidence of it ; that the individualism of bourgeoisdom is only a façade, and that at the very moment he proclaims it, the individual needs some fictitious entity or Divine Scapegoat on whom he can fling, in a final act of selfishness, the responsibility he never completely bore.

Thus Pacifism, as a method of avoiding the moral guilt of violence, is selfish. The pacifist claims, as a

primary duty, the right of saving his *own* skin. We are not concerned with whether it is ethically right for man to consider himself first. To the bourgeois philosophy, properly expressed, it is so. To another system of social relations it cannot be right. To a third—communism, it is neither right nor wrong, it is impossible, for all individual actions affect others in society. This fact makes the bourgeois inconsistent, and at one moment want to give his life for others and at the next to sacrifice their lives to preserve his soul.

Some pacifists, however, make a different defence. They are not concerned with their own souls. They are only thinking of others. Pacifism is the only way to stop violence and oppression. Violence breeds violence ; oppression breeds oppression. How far is this argument well grounded, and not merely a rationalisation of the bourgeois illusion ?

No pacifist has yet explained the causal chain by which non-resistance ends violence. It is true that it does so in this obvious way, that if no resistance is made to violent commands, no violence is necessary to enforce them. Thus if A does everything B asks him, it will not be necessary for B to use violence. But a dominating relation of this kind is in essence violent, although violence is not overtly shown. Subjection is subjection, and rapacity rapacity, even if the weakness of the victim, or the fear inspired by the victor, makes the process non-forcible. Non-resistance will not prevent it, any more than the lack of claws on the part of prey prevents carnivores battenning on them. On the con-

trary, the carnivore selects as his victim animals of the kind. The remedy is the elimination of carnivores, that is, the extinction of classes that live by preying on others.

Another assumption is that man, being what he is, the sight of his defenceless victims will arouse his pity. Now this assumption is not in itself ridiculous, but it needs examination. Is it a historical fact that the defencelessness of his victims has ever aroused man's pity? History records millions of opposite cases, of Tamburlane and his atrocities, Attila and his Huns (checked only by violence), Mohammedan incursions, primitive slayings, the Danes and their monastic massacres. Can anyone in good faith advance the proposition that non-resistance defeats violence? How could slave-owning states exist, if peaceful submission touched the hearts of the conquerors? How could man bear to slaughter perpetually the dumb unresisting races of sheep, swine, and oxen?

Moreover, the argument makes the usual bourgeois error of eternalising its categories, the belief that there is a kind of abstract Robinson Crusoe man of whose actions definite predictions can be made. But how can one seriously subsume under one category Tamburlane, Socrates, a Chinese mandarin, a modern Londoner, an Aztec priest, a Paleolithic hunter, and a Roman galley-slave? There is no abstract man, but men in different networks of social relations, with similar heredities but moulded into different proclivities by education and the constant pressure of social being.

To-day, it is man in bourgeois social relations with

whom we are concerned. Of what effect would it be if we no longer resisted violence, if England, for example, at the beginning of the Great War, had passively permitted Germany to occupy Belgium, and accept without resistance all that Germany wished to do ?

There is this much truth in the pacifist argument : that a country in a state of bourgeois social relations cannot act like a nomad horde. Bourgeoisdom has discovered that Tamburlane exploitation does not pay so well as bourgeois exploitation. It is of no use to a bourgeois to sweep over a country, to lift all the wine and fair women and gold thereof and sweep out again. The fair women grow old and ugly, the wine is drunk, and the gold avails for nothing but ornaments. That would be Dead Sea fruit in the mouth of bourgeois culture, which lives on an endless diet of profit and a perpetual domination.

Bourgeois culture has discovered that what pays is bourgeois violence. This is more subtle and less overt than Tamburlane violence. Roman violence, which consisted in bringing home not only fair women and gold, but slaves also, and making them work in the household, farms, and mines, occupied a mid-position. Bourgeois culture has discovered that those social relations are most profitable to the bourgeois which do not include rapine and personal slavery, but on the contrary forbid it. Therefore the bourgeois, wherever he has conquered non-bourgeois territory, such as Australia, America, Africa, or India, has imposed bourgeois, not Tamburlane, social relations. In the



name of liberty, self-determination, and democracy, or sometimes without these names, they enforce the bourgeois essence, private property, and the ownership of the means of production for profit, and its necessary prerequisite, the free labourer forced to dispose of his labour, for a wage, in the market. This priceless bourgeois discovery has produced material wealth beyond the dreams of a Tamburlane or a Cræsus.

Consequently England need have no fear that a victorious Germany would have raped all Englishwomen and beheaded all Englishmen and transported the Elgin marbles to Berlin. Bourgeois States do not do such things. It would have confined itself to taking England's Imperial possessions and completing the profitable task of converting them to full bourgeois social relations. It would also have attempted to cripple England as a trade competitor by a heavy indemnity. In other words, resist or not, it would, if victorious, have done to England what victorious England did to Germany.

Thus, even if the pacifist dream was realised, bourgeois violence would go on. But in fact it would not be realised. How could a bourgeois coercive State submit to having its source of profits violently taken away by another bourgeois State, and not use all the sources of violence at its disposal to stop it? Would it not rather disrupt the whole internal fabric of its State than permit such a thing? Is bourgeoisdom not now disrupting violently the whole fabric of society, rather than forgo its private profits and give up the system of economy on which it is based? Fascism and

Nazism, bloodily treading the road to bankruptcy, are evidence of this. Bourgeois economy, because it is unplanned, will cut its own throat rather than reform, and pacifism is only the expression of this last-ditch stand of bourgeois culture, which will at the best rather do nothing than do the thing that will end the social relations on which it is based.

Have we the courage to realise forcibly our views? What guarantee have we of their truth? The only real guarantee is action. We have the courage to enforce our beliefs upon physical matter, to build up the material substratum of society in houses, roads, bridges, and ships, despite the risk to human life, because our theories, generated by action, are tested in action. Let the bridge fall, the ship sink, the house collapse if we are wrong. We have investigated the causality of nature; let it be proved upon ourselves if we are wrong.

Exactly the same applies to social relations. Bridges have collapsed before now, cultures have mouldered in decay, vast civilisations have foundered, but they did not decay uselessly. From each mistake we have learned something, and the Tamburlane society, the slave-owning society, the feudal society, proved upon the test of action have failed. Yet it has only been partial failure; with each we learned a little more, just as the most recent bridge embodies lessons learned from the collapse of the first. Always the lesson was the same, it was the violence, the dominating relation between master and slave, lord and serf, bourgeois and proletarian, which was the weakness in the bridge.

But the pacifist, like all bourgeois theoreticians, is obsessed with the lazy lust of the absolute. 'Give me,' they all cry, 'absolute truth, absolute justice, some rule-of-thumb standard by which I can evade the strenuous task of finding the features of reality by intimate contact with it in action. Give me some logical talisman, some philosopher's stone, by which I can test all acts in theory and say, this is right. Give me some principle such as, *Violence is wrong*, so that I can simply refrain from all violent action and know that I am right.' But the only absolute they find is the standard of bourgeois economy. 'Abstain from social action.' Standards are made, not found.

Man cannot live without acting. Even to cease to act, to let things go their own way, is a form of acting, as when I drop a stone that perhaps starts an avalanche. And since man is always acting, he is always exerting force, always altering or maintaining the position of things, always revolutionary or conservative. Existence is the exercise of force on the physical environment and on other men. The web of physical and social relations that binds men into one universe ensures that nothing we do is without its effect on others, whether we vote or cease to vote, whether we help the police or let them go their way, whether we let two combatants fight or separate them forcibly or assist one against the other, whether we let a man starve to death or move heaven and earth to assist him. Man can never rest on the absolute; all acts involve consequences, and it is man's task to find out these consequences, and act

accordingly. He can never choose between action and inaction, he can only choose between life and death. He can never absolve himself with the ancient plea, 'My intentions were good', or 'I meant it for the best', or 'I have broken no commandment'. Even savages have a more vital conception than this, with whom an act is judged by its consequences, even as a bridge is judged by its stability. Therefore it is man's task to find out the consequences of acts : which means discovering the laws of social relations, the impulses, causes and effects of history.

Thus it is beside the point to ask the pacifist whether he would have defended Greece from the Persian or his sister from a would-be ravisher. Modern society imposes a different and more concrete issue. Under which banner of violence will he impose himself? The violence of bourgeois relations, or the violence not only to resist them but to end them? Bourgeois social relations are revealing, more and more insistently, the violence of exploitation and dispossession on which they are founded ; more and more they harrow man with brutality and oppression. By abstaining from action the pacifist enrolls himself under this banner, the banner of things as they are and getting worse, the banner of the increasing violence and coercion exerted by the *haves* on the *have-nots*. He calls increasingly into being the violences of poverty, deprivation, artificial slumps, artistic and scientific decay, fascism, and war.

Or he can enroll himself under the revolutionary banner, of things as they will be. In doing so he accepts

the stern necessity that he who is to replace a truth or an institution or a system of social relations, must substitute a better, that he who is to pull down a bridge, however inefficient, must put instead a better bridge. Bourgeois social relations were better perhaps than slave-owning, what can the revolutionary find better than them? And, having found them, how is he to bring them about? For one must not only plan the bridge, one must see how it is to be built, by violence, by force, by blasting the living rock and tugging and sweating at the stones that make it.

Thus, for the negativism of pacifism, which shores up the decaying world and tolerates man's increasing misery, the revolutionary must substitute the positivism of communism. He must forge a new economy adequate to take over bourgeois social relations and purge them of the coercive violence at their heart. But this violence grew from a class relation, the domination of an exploited by an exploiting class. To end this violence means building the classless State. Hating the violence of the bourgeois State, either in peace or war, the revolutionary must produce a society which needs neither violence in peace nor in war. Since it is material reality with which he is dealing, he must see the only path by which bourgeois social relations of violence can be turned into peaceful communist social relations. It is the path of revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, followed by the withering away of the State. If he does not clearly see—as an architect sees the building of foundations, and the transportation of

material—this mode of transformation of bourgeois violence into communist peace, his socialism remains an empty dream, he is still at heart a pacifist, a partisan of things as they are, you will still find him in fact, for all his theoretical protestations, enrolled beneath the banner of bourgeois violence, strike-breaking or giving Fascism 'free speech'.

To expropriate the expropriators, to oppose their coercion by that of the workers, to destroy all the instruments of class coercion and exploitation crystallised in the bourgeois State, is the first task. Who can lead the struggle but the exploited, and not only all the exploited but those whose very exploitation has organised them, massed them together, and made them co-operate socially, the proletariat. Since a dispossessed class will fight to the last ditch, while there is hope, how can the transition be affected other than violently, substituting the dictatorship of the proletariat and its necessary forms for the former dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and its characteristic forms?

But whereas the dictatorship of the bourgeois minority perpetuated itself, because the dispossessed class was also the exploited class, the dictatorship of the proletarian majority does not perpetuate itself, for it does not exploit the dispossessed class, but is itself both owner and worker of the means of production. Thus, as the dispossessed class disappears, the dictatorship of the proletariat in all its forms withers away. The pacifist's dream is realised. Violence departs from the world of men. Man at last becomes free.

# VI

## LOVE

### A STUDY IN CHANGING VALUES

THE natural human failing is to suppose nothing changes, that ideas are eternal, and that what is denoted by a word is as changeless and invariant as the word. Wisdom consists chiefly in learning that those vague gestures towards parts of reality, gestures we call concepts, not only cannot describe the thing indicated, but cannot even point to the same thing, only to something *divers et ondoyant* flashing to our interested eyes in the process of becoming. The dog subsumes all small running things under the concept 'prey'. He does not utter it as a word, but still shows the unvarying nature of his concept by a stereotyped action of pursuit. We can see his foolishness, for we have divided 'prey' into rabbits, rats, and cats, even perhaps into individual cats with different habits. But at a higher level of reference we make the same kind of mistake.

We tend to think, for example, that love is something definite and quite clear. If we are romantic poets, novelists or film-goers, we are in danger of picturing it as a kind of Paradisial pit into which we

fall. There is no doubt about it, either we are over the edge and deep in, or safe outside it. To the instinct psychologist love is an innate response, i.e. a clearly defined behaviour pattern set off by certain stimuli, just as an automatic model is set going by putting a penny in the slot. To the psychoanalyst, love is a quantity of psychic energy, called libido, as limited and homogenous as a pound of suet, which is parcelled by repressions and inhibition into various channels, returns on itself, is transferred, cathexed and displaced, but is still visualised as the same consistent suet.

But 'love'—unless we are to restrict the word to a specialised behaviour pattern dependent on the particular institutions of matrimony and property of our period of history—is man's name for the emotional element in social relations. All languages and usages seem to agree in this, I love, *j'aime*, are expressions which may be used both for sexual and social emotions. The Freudian has an explanation for this, which we shall examine in a moment. If our definition of love is correct, it is true that love makes the world go round. But it would be rather truer to say that the society going round as it does, makes love what it is. This is one of those relations like that of knowing and being, which can only be understood in a dialectical manner. Thought guides action, yet it is action which gives birth to consciousness, and so the two separate, struggle, and return on each other, and therefore perpetually develop. Just as human life is being mingled with knowing, society is economic production



mingled with love. This seems crude and even ludicrous to anyone accustomed to think of love as ethereal and in the soul, and economic production as base and earthly. But we love with our bodies and we eat and labour with our bodies, and deep love between two persons is generally distinguished from more transient forms of it by this test, that the two want to live together and thereafter function as one economic unit of society. As between the two, we know from biology that love, in its sexual form, appears before social economic production. But we also know that economic production in its primary individual form of metabolism, necessarily appears before love, for it is the essence of life. In the primitive cell metabolism exists before love has come into being. The cells at first multiply by fission, as a kind of surplus anabolism, and do not come together either in colonies (social behaviour) or fused in pairs for propagation (sexual behaviour). But because metabolism in the very dawn of life's history precedes the relation of love, it does not follow that love is a chance iridescence on life's surface. Metabolism, in the yet not fully understood affinity it demands among its protein molecules, already contains at a material level the rudiments of what men came to name Eros. Love must be implicit in matter.

Both popular and philosophic thought has recognised these deep foundations of love. Popular thought has given the same name to the affective tie that binds man and woman sexually, man and man in friendship,

and parents and child in family relationships. A king's love for his people, a disciple's love for his teacher, an animal's love for its young and its master, have all been included in the one category in spite of obvious differences. It is no accident that all the great religions which have moved men's minds have spoken so much of love. Religions always drew their value and their power from their symbolisation of unconscious social relations, and, since social relations are mediated by love, it is always about love that religion is essentially talking when it utters fantasies about God, salvation, Heaven, Hell and grace. The mystics' claim *God is love*, and the hymn of St. Paul to love, are accurate statements of the valuable common content of all religions which in the past have been social forces. The Trinity, the cherubims, the Holy Souls in Purgatory, and the Communion of the Saints do not exist, and it did not really matter to men whether they existed, for in the past men have been content with Yahweh and Sheol, Buddha and Nirvana, Baal and Gilgamesh. What does matter to men is the emotional element in social relations, which these myths symbolise, and which makes man in each generation what he is. This emotion is not separate from but springs out of the economic basis of these relations, which thus determine religion. Man's quality in each age is determined by his emotional and technological relations, and these are not separate but part of the one social process.

The Freudian position is that all emotional relations

are simply variations of sexual love, cheated of their aim. That is why men call all varieties of tender relations 'love', because they are simply modified sexuality or diverted libido. Tenderness is inhibited sexuality. Although this view is attractive as a simplification, it is based on confused thinking. It assumes that there is a clear goal, sexual intercourse, and any love that does not achieve this goal is in some sense thwarted. This, however, presupposes something with this goal clearly in mind, and unless we believe in a god of love, this can only be the lover. But by definition the psyche whose inhibited sexuality is supposed to become love, is unconscious of the real goal. Take the example of infantile sexuality, an important part of Freud's theory of love. How can infantile affections be thwarted sexual love? On the one hand the infant, with no experience of sexual intercourse, cannot desire it consciously, and he cannot desire it unconsciously, i.e. somatically, because he has not the organs or reflexes for achieving sexual intercourse. Without the appropriate reflexes, sexual intercourse cannot exist for the unconscious. Its love therefore is of another kind—childish love. It is true that childish love is associated with zones many of which afterwards become sexually erotic, but that is only to say that man is material, that he has a body, and that this is used for contacts with other bodies. His contacts with other members of the world must be real physical contacts—mainly tactile when he is an infant, afterwards also visual and aural. Childish

love is not thwarted sexual love, for the child neither knows sexual intercourse as an aim, nor is capable of it. It is childish love. That childish love is later to become sexual love is a truism. 'Thwarting' begs the question. Suppose, instead, Freud had said that infantile love was 'modified' adult love. We should at once have seen the fallacy. On the contrary it is adult sexual love which is 'modified' infantile love. It includes the more primitive behaviour pattern, but, as Freud admits, integrates it in a much more elaborate and powerful new system, due to the coming into being of the reflexes associated with sexual intercourse, the secondary sexual hormone, and all the qualitative changes in psychic orientation and content associated with puberty. Therefore Freud is standing love's development on its head. It would be precisely as accurate to regard the baby's body as a thwarted or inhibited adult body, as to regard the baby's affective life as that of a 'polymorphous perverse' adult.

In the same way the relation of a parent to an infant is not sexual love thwarted or inhibited. Sexual love is a behaviour-response, including a desire for sexual intercourse, evoked by certain stimuli. The infant is not a stimulus for this. It is very doubtful if the infant is primarily the stimulus for instinctive parental love at all. The phenomenon of 'false pregnancy' among bitches seems to prove the reverse. These animals develop after heat, in certain circumstances, maternal behaviour and emotion, without having become actually pregnant. To suppose that their maternal

love is thwarted sexual love towards a non-existent puppy is to make psychology a comic opera. The parental love behaviour pattern varies widely from the sexual.

Again, the normal relations of friendship between persons of the same sex, in all their variety, from lasting and intimate friendship to a tenderness we feel for someone we have never seen merely because he is a fellow-countryman or a fellow-creature in distress, form a group of distinctive behaviour-patterns. It is unscientific to regard these as kinds of thwarted or inhibited sexual love. Indeed to do so robs the quite clear concept of sexual perversion of any meaning. In homosexuality or zoophily the sexual behaviour-emotion pattern is directed to abnormal objects, and is necessarily modified thereby. But if *all* tenderness for persons of one's own sex or animals, is simply the sexual pattern of behaviour modified by the novel circumstances, what is the difference? How can we distinguish between friendship and perversion? The error is due to a misunderstanding of what the instinct really is. An instinct is a certain innate behaviour-pattern or chain of reflexes, conditioned or modified by experience. The word 'love', as commonly used, includes such modified behaviour-patterns as delight in other peoples' presence, sensibility to one person rather than another, generosity towards them, desire to see them, and various other forms of affectionate behaviour which psychologists can only describe aridly and formally. It includes also the desire for sexual

intercourse. Only behaviour-patterns of which this last is a component should be called sexual love, and to suppose that all the other forms of friendliness contain a suppressed desire for sexual intercourse, which is roughly the Freudian position, is to adopt the plan of the White Knight—

*to dye one's whiskers green.  
And then to use so large a fan  
That they will not be seen.*

Man, like all animals, is a creature whose innate behaviour-patterns are modified by experience, usually for 'the better', that is, so as to deal more expertly with reality. This process is called learning. We learn with our love responses as with others. To call this process inhibition or repression inverts the process of evolution.

Of course, sexual and friendly behaviour responses are very closely connected, and each pattern contains component parts common to both. But since one body, with one central nervous system, is common to all of one organism's behaviour, it is obvious that all its behaviour-patterns must contain a large number of common components. Running may, for example, in any animal, figure as part of sexual behaviour or as part of self-preservation (fear) behaviour. It does not follow that one instinct is the other, modified, repressed or inhibited.

As soon as we rid our mind of mythological entities of these separate instincts, like distinct souls, planted

in the animal or human breast, we will be clearer on this point.

In 'the instincts', the savage soul—the little manikin dwelling in the marionette body and pulling the strings—has returned to psychology. With Freud this manikin, under the name of libido or eternal Eros, figures in the strangest way as a kind of symbolisation of bourgeois conceptions of liberty, like Rousseau's natural man. The unfortunate libido is exploited and oppressed and chained in the cruellest way by the structure of society and in its torments gives birth to all sociological and ideological phenomena. All this is simply a return to the old 'natural philosophy' conception of an indwelling vital force, with eternal desires and aims of its own.

This conception leads Freud to suppose that whatever a thing becomes, it remains the same thing inhibited or sublimated. This is to deny change. If soil becomes a rose, it is not just soil inhibited and sublimated. It is certainly still composed of the same elements, but it is also a rose, with its own character and qualities and laws. Even here Freud makes another error. If what is derived from a thing is nothing but that thing, we should not say that social relations are nothing but sexual relations; we should say that sexual love is nothing but social relations. In evolution primitive social relations precede primitive sexual relations if the following considerations are correct:

It is generally supposed that ontogenesis corresponds on the whole to phylogenesis. Before the infant

achieves sexual love, it first experiences the simple metabolic relation between mother and foetus, in which sexual love cannot be said to enter, for here there are no erotogenous zones. This is an economic relation between mother and child. The next step is infantile love, with erotogenous zones but not distinctively sexual behaviour. Finally, in the crisis of adolescence, the distinctive sexual reflexes appear. It will be argued that the sexual congress of ovum and spermatozoon precedes these stages. But these are protozoic relations, and man is metazoic. In the metazoa, sexual relations come after the simpler social relations of genesis and nurture.

In any case the same holds good of protozoa. The precedent condition of the congress of ovum and spermatozoon is the production of ova and spermatozoa. This is an asexual process and is part of the internal asexual economy of the cells of the body, bound together in a metabolism which is plainly economic. The relations of the primary sex cells are therefore asexual before they are sexual. But this is so with all protozoa, even those that do not become metazoa. Asexual relations between them always precede sexual, which grow out of them as a kind of late differentiation. Indeed this must plainly be the case. Before multiplication can proceed by sexual congress, there must be multiplication by fission, for you cannot, mathematically, get many out of one by fusion. Fission must come first, and fission demands a surplus anabolism which of itself implies a primitive economic



basis. These considerations show clearly that, on the 'nothing but' basis, sexual love is *nothing but* social relations. But, of course, the 'nothing but' reduction is invalid. Sexual love is in mankind *something more* than the innate response that produces fusion between male and female cells. Social relations in humanity are something more than the metabolism that coordinates the cells of a metazoan, or a volvox colony. Passionate love and social altruism are the results of long periods of historical change, and the change is real, it is not just the old eternal entities wearing masks. But like a modern Parmenides, the instinct psychologist seems reluctant to recognise the reality of 'becoming'.

The simpler relations between cells, as evidenced in the ordinary metazoan body or the aggregations of asexual protozoa known as colonies, are primitive social or economic relations and form the basis from which human society's productive relations and forces have flowered. But it does not follow that they are the 'same thing' carried out in different media. They are what they are, subject to their own distinctive laws. What the individual body has in common with society is this: the relations between the cells of the human body are economic, there is division of labour, central control, exchange of products, and so forth. The one subordinates its interests, when required, to the whole. As in all socio-economic relations, the cells achieve more in unison than they do separately. But the body is subject to biological, society to sociological laws.

The sexual cells appear on the scene at puberty, when

the metazoan body has been a social entity for some time. Sexuality is therefore a kind of luxury, appearing at a late date, as a special modification of social-economic relations. *Sexual love is a modified economic relation.* Altruism, for example, is not, when exhibited socially, the result of an identification of one's self with the loved one, and therefore a special form of sexual love, as Freud suggests. Altruism, in its primitive and basic form of the sacrifice of one individual for others, appears long before sexual love, as part of the economic process of metabolism in the cells of the human body, unconnected with sexuality. But conscious altruism in a human being is not just the unconscious 'self-sacrifice' of a white corpuscle. It is a new quality, based on an old quantity. And sexual love is a new quality, differentiated out of the simpler socio-economic relations that preceded it.

Differentiation implies a difference. Although sexual love as a late development of socio-economic relations, gathers up within itself the qualities of its basis, it also contains something distinctively new. Sexual love is not a luxury, existing only for itself, but it returns again into the social relations from which it sprang, making them different to what they were. And, so changed, they in turn feed more richly the new thing rooted in them. Both reflect light on each other, for it is plain that sexual love, basically a chain of simple spinal reflexes, as shown by experiments on decerebrate guinea-pigs, has in humanity attracted to itself a number of economic relations and become enriched

by them. The act of sexual intercourse need not involve this interweaving of relations, and in the lower organisms does not. Sexual intercourse need not be intertwined with the relations involved in the rearing of young, as in human family life, nor in the relations involved in earning one's living, keeping house, and making friends, as in human marriage. But because it is so intertwined, it is like a source of warmth irradiating these relations, and these in turn become fuel which feed it and bring about its enrichment and growth. The whole forms an elaborate system, part of the tapestry of society, and the richer pattern resulting from the mutual interweaving indicates that the Freudian conception of social relations as modified sexual love inverts the process of becoming.

The evolution of sexuality was of vital significance in the history of organisms. Primitive metabolic relations, such as those obtaining between the cells of metazoan bodies, are marked by a totalitarian ruthlessness in which the individual, as such, does not exist. The individual cell is completely subordinated to the organism as a whole. This is necessarily the case, because the cell is not yet an individual in its own right, but simply a part of the parent cell which has become differentiated and detached. This involves an almost exact likeness to the parent cell, so that such cells, as long as they continue to be capable of fission, have a kind of immortality, the children being almost exactly the same as the parents. It is also correspondingly difficult for the new to come into being.

Generation after generation repeats the same pattern. All defects are reproduced. The parent cell has eaten sour grapes, and therefore the grandchildren's teeth are necessarily set on edge.

The coming of sexuality breaks the stale routine of habit. It is therefore the genesis of individuality within the ambit of society. Something distinctively new now comes into being, because the child will no longer resemble either parent exactly but, by combining a selection of the genes from both, will be someone different from either. Moreover, each child, with a different selection of genes, will be slightly different, and thus bad qualities may be weeded out by natural selection. Not all the children's teeth are set on edge. The range of qualities in the offspring is increased. Some, it is true, will be far worse than the offspring of an asexual parent, for they will unite the defects of both parents, but others will be better, and natural selection will have a wider range of varieties to work on. It is as if good has come into the world by the generation of evil, and if we take seriously the identity of opposites, must not this be the case?

At the same time death has come into the world. Love, the giver of individuality, is also the giver of death, the antithesis of personality. That is why the life-instinct and the death-instinct, Eros and Thanatos, seem so closely united, not as Freud thought because they are specific instincts, but because death defines love. The immortality of primitive cells, secured by

simple fission, vanishes when they conjugate and spawn. The parents now live in their children only in a provisional half-hearted manner.

This is a kind of price that life pays for greater difference, for becoming life as we understand it. For greater richness and complexity, hastening the hand of time, we pay the priceless coin of Death. To their children, no longer simple buds of themselves, the individual cells can bequeath more abundant life and greater differentiation but only by sinking half their genetic share in them and giving up their near immortality. Only with this advent of sexual love and real death can one talk about 'personalities' and 'individuals'; other cells are buds. The birth of a new personality demands the death of the old. This 'I' that dies is created by death.

In its appearance, none the less, sexual love is selfish. Sexual cells reject the colonial and social tie of asexual reproduction in favour of an intimate exclusive tie between two of them alone. They are luxurious cells, playing no part in the economic production of the metazoan body. And, similarly, in social life sexual love has a selfish aspect. The lovers turn away from the community; their demand is to be alone, to be by themselves, to enjoy each other. Thus sexual love appears as a dissolving power in society.

The social asexual cell is strictly subordinated to the plan of the organism. It works tirelessly, secreting or vibrating or dying for the good of the community. Beside it the sexual cell seems, in the community,

like the selfish hedonist beside the devoted hard-working celibate. The sexual cell is responding with all its being to something which allures merely by the satisfaction it gives to the individual. Love, even in its other-regarding aspect, seems a kind of giant selfishness projected on the beloved. But this is not the whole truth. This same selfish cell brings to birth something which is unknown before—individuality. The cell, temporarily released from the iron plan of organic metabolism by the invention of sexuality, is by this act enriched in behaviour. It is the beginning of that individuation which in man leads to consciousness. The sexual behaviour brings a new pattern into life. On the one hand the sexual cells, ignoring the demands of 'society', are thereby led to enrich and complicate their self-hood. More importantly, this very sexual partnership involves eventually the annihilation of both personalities in the birth of the new individualities, whose characters will be formed from a selection of the genes of both parents, and therefore different from either. The self-sacrificing cell enjoys the possibility of a perpetual immortality as a reward for its self-sacrifice. The sexual cell buys its one brief hour of glorious life, for an age without a name, and yet, by that very death and life, it has given rise to the potentialities of individualism.

This, however, is too anthropomorphic a way of looking at it. As long as asexuality prevails, it is not possible to talk about individuality at all. Are the leaves of one tree individual? No, they are part of

the one tree. In the same way the cells of the metazoan body are all part of each other though spatially separate. They are formed from each other by simple fission. Therefore neither the question of self-sacrifice nor immortality arise. The asexual cell has no 'self' to sacrifice and immortality is meaningless except in the sense that all matter is immortal. Immortality is meaningless without *personal* immortality, and the asexual cell has no personality.

Immortality is not a superior kind of mortality, a life protracted to infinity, an endless personal survival. It is the primitive state from which both mortality and personality arose. If the concept of life to us is 'almost meaningless except as the life of an individual, we must say that death gave rise to life ; both are aspects of the same movement of differentiation. All craving for immortality, so human and so understandable, is yet a craving for a regression, for a return to primitive unconscious being, to shift off ourselves the heavy responsibilities of consciousness, love and individuality. All conceptions of immortality as endless survivals of personalities walking about in familiar surroundings strike the mind with a strange sense of unreality. The only conceptions of immortality which seem reasonable, even if impossible, are the Buddhist and Hindoo conceptions of immortality as a merging of oneself into the absolute, Nirvana, a beingless primitive sleep. And this is what immortality is, a return to the blind unconscious regression of primitive being, back farther still to the timelessness of immortal

matter. Because life, faced with any difficult situation, always tends to wish to relapse to a solution achieved at an earlier stage of development, this concept of immortality makes an appeal to man particularly in periods of inferiority or depression.

This concern with immortality is not so much a fear of death as a special kind of defeatist resignation to it, as in late Egypt and the Oriental mystery cults. A *faint* belief or *complete disbelief* in immortality, so far from begetting a resignation to death, necessarily produces a vigorous dislike of it. All beaten, depressed and terrified people, all slave and expropriated classes, turn to another immortal timeless life for consolation. Biological immortality, splitting into personality and death, generates two opposites which repel each other ; the more full and abundant our life, the more we are repelled by death, and this repulsion, so painful, is yet productive of pleasure, for it forces us to cram our now valued lives full of richness and complexity, to seize great armfuls of time and action, to achieve and conquer and love and suffer before we die. Death, the negation of life, thus generates it. All spring, all youth, all health yields its peculiar and rich savour just because of this, that they go :

*And at my back I always hear,  
Time's winged chariot hastening near.*

. . . . .

Human society is distinguished from the simple metabolic society of somatic cells because it is more



than metabolic, it is also individualistic. The individual, apparently opposed to society, yet gives society its inner driving power, and society by its internal development itself brings about the individuation of its units.

Insect society here contrasts with human. There has been a regression to a relative immortality. The workers have all been desexualised. They have lost their individuality and regressed almost to the status of somatic cells. The strange rapport between members of a hive or formicary is not surprising when we think of them as virtually all parts of the one body, daughter cells of the queen. But this same regression and de-individuation produces stagnation as compared with human society. All powers of change and individualism are concentrated in the genetic change of the few sexual members. It is therefore a slow change. Insect societies have almost ceased to live. Immune from the changing and yet living hand of time, they have achieved some of the dull immortality of the diamond.

In human society, however, the endless war between individual and economic relations, between love and metabolism, is the source of endless social advance. Sexuality, because it gave rise to individuality, also helped to give rise to consciousness. Metabolism (or productive forces) changes from age to age, and this change imposes a tension upon productive relations. But this strife, extending throughout society, is felt in a characteristic form in the sphere of man's feeling, in his consciousness, for consciousness is basically

affective. It is felt as if outside forces in society are starving or thwarting men's emotional lives, as if life is becoming glamourless or cruel. For the productive relations are social relations and conscious tenderness is generated in them.

Sexual love itself is continually enriched and changed by economic relations, at the same time as economic relations gain new warmth and complexity from love. To every stage of economic development corresponds a richer, subtler, more sensitive behaviour-pattern associated with sexual love. To bourgeois culture belongs passionate love, to feudal romantic or chivalrous love, and to slave-owning Greek culture Platonic love.

To our generation the association of economic relations with sexual love seems arbitrary, not because our idea of love is too rich but because our notion of economic relations is too bourgeois. Bourgeois civilisation has reduced social relations to the cash nexus. They have become emptied of affection. To a psychologist, the whole world seems suffering from a starvation of love, and this need appears in a compensatory and pathological form as neurosis, hate, perversion, and unrest.

Even to-day, in those few economic relations which still survive in a pre-bourgeois form, we can see tenderness as the essence of the relation. The commodity fetishism which sees in a relation between *men* only a relation between *things* has not yet dried it up. The economic relation of the mother to her

foetus, of the child to the parent and *vice versa*, retains its primitive form to show this clearly. We can see fainter traces in the relation of master to pupil, of governess to child, household servant to master or mistress, and the few surviving examples of a feudal relation between master and man.

Where can this tenderness be found in the characteristically bourgeois relations our culture substitutes for them—the relations of capitalist and labourer; hotel servant and guest; company promoter and shareholder; correspondence-course writer and mug? This tenderness, expelled from all other relations, is collected and utilised to-day in a vague mystical manner as the binding force for the one social relation of ‘being in the same State’. This is a genuine social relation, that of being in the fabric of coercion exploited by one ruling class, but it is not one which in its named form is likely to produce tenderness. It is therefore necessary to substitute for the naked relation a fictional one—a fictitious ‘race’, a wonderful happy family, or a dummy King or Leader whose wisdom and statesmanship and character are regarded as semi-divine, even where his position is constitutionally that of a rubber stamp. By this means a powerful ‘*participation mystique*’ is secured. As Fascism and Nazism show, the more violent the exploitation, the more ardent and mythological the patriotism; the more heartless and unemotional the relations, the more the parade of hypocritical feeling. This is characteristic of developed bourgeois relations. In

primitive relations among a group, as the researches of anthropologists show, economic production is inextricably interwoven with social affection. Between tribes, between chief and subject, or between different members of a group, the economic relation figures as an exchange of gifts, as a tribute of affection in the literal sense. It is the love that goes with the gifts, which is the giving, is the vital economic thing. Many primitive transactions which to the early bourgeois observer seemed to be bourgeois exchange, that is, the getting of as much as possible for as little as possible, are now, by more searching observers, discovered to be the very opposite, each side trying to embarrass the other by a superfluity of gifts. The Melanesian's pride is found to be in his having contributed more yams than anyone else to his maternal uncle or chief. At the potlatch, the North American Indian demonstrates his social value by impoverishing himself. This conception of economic relation as tender relation, and a fit medium for generosity and altruism, appears in barbaric and even feudal relations. We must not idealise them, or imagine that simple savage tenderness is the same as the more developed, subtle and sophisticated emotion we feel. But it is equally wrong, by wresting and straining the facts, to give a bourgeois cynical interpretation to the different primitive economic relations of agriculture, hunting and land tenure among the primitive African, American and Oceanic races.

In all the distinctive bourgeois relations, it is char-

acteristic that tenderness is completely expelled, because tenderness can only exist between men, and in capitalism all relations appear to be between a man and a commodity.

The relation of the guildsman to his journeyman, the slave-owner to his plantation slave, the lord to his serf, the king to his subjects, was a relation between man and man, and although it was a relation, not of co-operation but of domination and submission, of exploiter and exploited, it was a human relation. It was unpleasantly like the relation of a man and his dog, but at least it was tender. How can even that much consideration enter into the relations of a group of shareholders to the employees of a limited liability company? Or between Indian coolies and British tea drinkers? Or between a bourgeois bureaucracy and the proletariat?

In bourgeois relations the sole recognised legal social relation among adults is the contract, considered as damnifiable in cash. Nothing can be enforced upon a man but the payment of money; even marriage can be escaped from by a suitable cash compensation. Man is completely free except for the payment of money. That is the overt character of bourgeois relations. Secretly it is different, for society can only be a relation between men, not between man and a thing, not even between man and cash. Bourgeois society thinks that is the relation on which it turns, but, as Marx showed, in bourgeois society it is still a relation between men, between exploiters and exploited. It is

the vehicle of a specific type of exploitation. The bourgeois dream is that by substituting this relation to a thing for feudal slave-owning or primitive relations between men, man becomes completely free. But this is an illusion. Since man only becomes free through social relations, this means that the bourgeois shuts his eyes to facts. For conscious planned social relations he substitutes unconscious unplanned social relations which, like all unconscious forces, work blindly and disastrously.

None the less, the bourgeois was determined to believe that the market was the only social relation between man and man. This meant that he must refuse to believe that love was an integral part of a social relation. He repressed this tenderness from his social consciousness. In its final form this becomes the treason of man to his capacity for love, the appearance of love in the form of neurosis, hate, and fantasy, which the psycho-analysts discover everywhere in bourgeois man. In one sense the Married Woman's Property Act was a charter of freedom for women. In another sense it was merely a charter of bourgeois repression, a recognition that the economic relations between husband and wife were no longer tender but merely cash.

In their early stages bourgeois relations, by intensifying individualism, give a special heightening to sexual love. Before they crystallise out as relations to cash, bourgeois social relations simply seem to express man's demand for freedom from obsolete social bonds, and this demand for individuality is then a progressive

force. Sexual love now takes on, as clearly seen in art, a special value as the expression *par excellence* of individuality. We have the emergence of that characteristic achievement of bourgeois culture, passionate love, conceived as both romantic and sensual, whereas neither Greek nor mediæval culture could conceive romantic and sensual love except as exclusive opposites. Passionate love contributes new overtones to feeling and conscious life. Moreover, this demand for individuality was also enriching other forms of love, as long as it was revolutionary and creative. It gave men a new tenderness towards each other, conceived as a tenderness of each other's liberty, of each other's personal worth. Thus bourgeois culture in its spring-time gave birth to passionate sexual love, and a tenderness for the 'liberty'—the individual outline—of other members of society. Both these are genuine enrichments, which civilisation cannot now lose.

None the less, the contradiction in bourgeois social relations, that private advantage is common weal, that freedom is sought individually *and* anti-socially, necessarily revealed its nature in due course. Man cannot exist without relations to other men, and the bourgeois demand that he should do so merely meant that these relations were disguised as a relation to commodities. As this developing relation produced industrial capitalism and the modern bourgeois State, it sucked the tenderness out of all social relations. Ultimately it even affected sexual love itself, and began to take from it the very enrichments sexual

love had derived from tender social relations. Passionate bourgeois love is to-day like a flower which is being stripped of its petals one by one. These petals are the patterns of behaviour derived from bourgeois social relations, which had been transferred to sexual love and been transformed and warmed by it, just as the flower's colourful petals consist of converted green leaves. In the institution of bourgeois marriage, these economic relations—the *individual* family, the *personal* income—were warmed by sexual love into something of nobility. True, bourgeois social relations, even when so transformed, retained some of their ugly untender character. The man too often regards love as similar to a bourgeois property relation, as a relation between a man and a thing and not between man and man. The wife was his property for life. She had to be beautiful to gratify his acquisitive instincts ; faithful because a man's property must not alienate itself from him ; but he, the owner, can be unfaithful, because he can acquire other property without affecting his present holding. A similar relation imposed itself on the children he had fed and clothed, and therefore paid their wages. They had sold their labour power to him. In Roman slave-owning civilisation, the child's legal position appears as that of slave to the father, and moreover a slave incapable of manumission. But even slavery is a relation between men. These ugly possessive features of bourgeois social relations always gave bourgeois love a selfish jealous undertone, which the bourgeois, despite the researches of anthropology,



considers as instinctive and natural. Private property was not invented by bourgeoisdom. It is a potentiality of man's nature, or it could never have appeared in bourgeoisdom. But bourgeoisdom was its flowering, its elevation and the prime motive power of social relations; and the flavour accordingly pervades all bourgeois life.

With the exhaustion of bourgeois social relations, bourgeois passionate love begins also to wither before the economic blast. On the one hand marriage has become increasingly 'expensive'. It must be put off till late life. That marriage—which for bourgeois culture and particularly for the woman had been the most valued pattern of love behaviour—is to-day only a late and specialised variety of it. Children are increasingly expensive, and the tender social relations associated with them more rarely form part of the standard marriage pattern. From these and other causes that elaborate and complex creation, passionate bourgeois love is more and more being stripped of its corolla and reverting to a primitive form of fugitive sexual intercourse. This, the inevitable consequence of the exhaustion of bourgeois social relations, is denounced as 'Sin', the 'levity of the young', 'the breakdown of the institution of marriage', 'growing promiscuity', the 'result of birth-control', and so on. But all this abuse is beside the point. Passionate bourgeois love really prepared its own death. The same causes which caused its flowering in course of time brought about this withering.

To-day love could prepare an appalling indictment of the wrongs and privations that bourgeois social relations have inflicted upon it. The misery of the world is economic, but that does not mean that it is cash. That is a bourgeois error. Just because they are economic, they involve the tenderest and most valued feelings of social man. For the satisfaction of all the rich emotional capabilities and social tenderness of which bourgeois relations have deprived him, man turns vainly to religion, hate, patriotism, fascism, and the sentimentality of films and novels, which paint in imagination loves he cannot experience in life. Because of this he is neurotic, unhappy, sick, liable to the mass-hatreds of war and anti-semitism, to absurd and yet pathetic Royal Jubilee or Funeral enthusiasms and to mad impossible loyalties to Hitlers and Aryan grandmothers. Because of this life seems to him empty, stale, and unprofitable. Man delights him not, nor woman neither.

Bourgeois social relations, by transforming in this way all tender relations between men to relations to commodities, prepare their own doom. The threads that bind feudal lord to liege, chief to tribe, patriarch to household slave, father to son, because they are tender are strong. But those that bind shareholder to wage-employee, civil servant to taxpayer, and all men to the impersonal market, because they are merely cash and devoid of tender relations, cannot hold. The chief's laws are understandable. The fiat of a man god is still a personal and affectionate command.

But the laws of supply and demand (their substitute in bourgeois culture) are without any power save blind compulsion. To-day it is as if love and economic relations have gathered at two opposite poles. All the unused tenderness of man's instincts gather at one pole and at the other are economic relations, reduced to bare coercive rights to commodities. This polar segregation is the source of a terrific tension, and will give rise to a vast transformation of bourgeois society. They must, in a revolutionary destruction and construction, return in on each other and fuse in a new synthesis. This is communism.

Thus the forces that produce communism can be viewed from two aspects. From the quantitative aspect, productive forces, which have outgrown bourgeois social relations, burst those fetters. But the fight is fought to an issue in men's consciousness. Man, the individual, feels the outmoding of these relations, their sloughing by reality, as the death of all that is valuable to him. The demand to bring back to consciousness these vanished values appears as hate for the present and love for the new, the dynamic power of revolution. Emotion bursts from the ground in which it has been repressed with all the force of an explosion. The whole structure of society is shattered. This is a revolution.

## VII

### FREUD

#### A STUDY IN BOURGEOIS PSYCHOLOGY

FREUD is certain to be remembered and honoured as one of the pioneers of scientific psychology. But it is probable that like Kepler he will be regarded as a scientist who discovered important empirical facts but was unable to synthesise these discoveries except in a primitive semi-magical framework. Kepler with his divine Sun God, lived in the religious age of physics, Freud for all his honesty lives in the mythical era of psychology :

‘It may now be expected that the other of the “two heavenly forces”, eternal Eros, will put forth his strength so as to maintain himself alongside of his equally immortal adversary.’

This is Freud’s prognosis of the future of our civilisation. It is no bad symbolisation of the psychological trend of the present, but it will be seen that it is mythological symbolisation. Examination of the remainder of his psychology shows that it is generally religious in its presentation. It is a psychology of forces and personifications. Freud is no exceptional psychologist here. Psychology still awaits its Newton. At least Freud has

refused to accept the outworn shams of Christianity or of idealistic metaphysics. In *The Future of an Illusion* he maintains the fruitful materialistic traditions of bourgeois science, which bourgeois science itself to-day as it loses its grip is deserting. The metaphysical psychology with its memory, reason, conation, perception, thought and feeling which Freud helped to destroy is more mythological than Freudism. This psychology, of which Freudism is an enemy, belongs to an even earlier age of science. It reduces mentation to verbiage, and then the organisation of this verbiage is called thought. It is, however, real mentation with which Freud deals always, only he symbolises the inner structure of this neurological behaviour in terms of real entities as glamorous and personal as the Olympian gods of old. The Censor, the Ego, the Super-ego, the Id, the Oedipus complex, and the Inhibition are mind-deities, like the weather deities who inhabited Greek Olympus. Freud's picture of a struggle between eternal Eros and eternal Thanatos, between the life and death instincts, between the reality principle and the pleasure principle, is only the eternal dualism of reflective barbarians, carried over by Christianity from Zoroastrianism, and now introjected by Freud into the human mind. It represents a real struggle but in terms of a Western bourgeois myth.

As confirmation of his fable about Zeus, the Greek could point to the thunder and lightning. As confirmation of the endless war between Ormuzd and Ahriman, the Parsee could remind the sceptic of the endless war-

fare that tears life in twain. Freudians point to the psychic phenomena of dreams, hysteric and neurotic symptoms, obsessions and slips of the pen and tongue as confirmation of their intricate mythology. The early scientists could claim the fall of every stone as the evidence of the mysterious force of gravity and all phenomena of heat and cold as testimony to the passage of a mysterious 'caloric'. In Freudism 'libido' plays the part of the mythical 'caloric' of eighteenth-century heat mechanics, or of the 'gravity' of Newtonian physics.

It may be urged with some reason that psychology is an appropriate sphere for fables and emotive symbolisation, but this claim withdraws it from the circle of science to that of art. It is better to demand that mythical psychology should exist only in the novel and that psychology should be a science. If so, the obligation falls upon psychoanalysts either to leave any empirical facts they have discovered in thin air for some abler mind to fit into a causal scheme, as Newton correlated Kepler's separate and arbitrary laws of planetary motion, or else they must clearly exhibit the causality of their discoveries without recourse to mythological entities. This Freud and his followers have failed to do. Thus instead of being causal and materialistic, their psychology is religious and idealistic. Yet Freud is a materialist and is clearly aware of the illusory content of religion. But he is also a bourgeois. This class outlook affects his psychology through certain implicit assumptions from which he starts, assumptions that

appear in all bourgeois culture as a disturbing yet invisible force, just as Uranus until discovered was for us only a mysterious perturbation in the orbits of the known planets. These implicit assumptions are firstly that the consciousness of men is *sui generis*, unfolding like a flower from the seed instead of being a primarily social creation, and secondly that there is a source of free action in the individual, the 'free will', the 'wish', or the 'instincts', which is only free in proportion to the extent to which it is unrestrained by social influences. These two assumptions are of vital significance for psychology, and just because they are implicit, they act like buried magnets, distorting all Freud's psychology and making it an unreal kind of a science tainted with wish-fulfilment.

Freud has been exceptionally unfortunate in that his school of psychology has been rent repeatedly by schisms. Jung and Adler are the most notable schismatics, but almost every psychoanalyst is a heretic in embryo. Now this must necessarily have been a matter for sorrow to Freud although he has borne it as calmly as he has borne the numerous attacks from all with vested interests in contemporary morality whom his discoveries seemed to menace. The Freudian schisms are not paralleled in other sciences. The disciples of a discoverer of new empirical principles, such as the disciples of Darwin, Newton and Einstein, do not as a rule turn and rend him. They work within the general limits of his formulations, merely enriching and modifying them, without feeling called upon to

attack the very foundations on which the structure is based.

Freud is himself indirectly to blame. Schism is the hall-mark of religion, and a man who treats scientific facts as does Freud, in a religious way, must necessarily expect the trials and tribulations, as well as the intense personal relationships, of a religious leader. In approaching science in a religious spirit, I do not mean in a 'reverent' spirit. The scientist necessarily approaches reality, with all its richness and complexity, with a feeling of reverence and insignificance which is the more intense the more materialistic he is, and, the less he feels that this reality is a mere offshoot or emanation of a Divine friend of his. I mean by a 'religious' approach, the belief that scientific phenomena are adequately explained by any symbolisation which includes and accounts for the phenomena. Thus 'caloric' accounts for temperature phenomena. None the less, no such mysterious stuff exists. In the same way Freud supposes that any fable which includes a connected statement of genuine psychical phenomena is a scientific hypothesis, whether or no it exhibits in a causal manner the inner relations of the phenomena. Of course such explanations break down because they do not fit into the causal scheme of science as a whole.

Now this is precisely the way religion sets about explaining the world, thunder and lightning are caused by deities. The world exists because it was created by a God. Disaster is the will of an omnipotent deity, or the triumph of an evil deity over an omnipotent deity. We



die because we sinned long ago. Moreover, religion naïvely supposes that the fact that there is thunder and lightning, that the world exists, that disaster occurs in it, and that we die, is a proof that deities exist, that God created the world, and that we sinned long ago. This is what theologians mean by the Cosmological and Teleological proofs of God's existence. But this kind of 'proof' was long ago banished from science, and it is strange to see a man of Freud's intellectual gifts impressed by it. It is a sign of the crisis reached in bourgeois culture when psychology cannot escape from this kind of thing.

It follows from presuming that an adequate explanation of certain facts will be furnished by any fable connecting these facts, that for any group of facts an indefinite number of myths can be advanced as an explanation. Thus an indefinite number of religions exist which explain with different myths the same facts of man's unhappiness, his cruelty, his aspirations, his sufferings, his inequality and his death. Religion by its method of approach spawns schisms. The only reason that Churches can exist without disintegration is because of their material foundations in the social relations of their time.

Science can recognise only explanations which with as little symbolisation as possible exhibit the mutual determination of the phenomena concerned, and their relation with the rest of reality. Thus one scientific hypothesis is intolerant. It drives out another.

Scientific explanations, because of their austere struc-

ture, are not equally good, as different religions are equally good. One or other must go to the wall. And the test is simple. If, of two hypotheses one exhibits more comprehensively and less symbolically the structure of the determinism of the phenomena it explains and their relation to the already established structure of reality, that hypothesis will be more powerful as an instrument for predicting the recurrence of such phenomena in real life. Hence arises the crucial test, which decides between one hypothesis and another. For example, the crucial tests of the Einstein theory, as compared with the Newtonian, were the bending of light, the perturbation of planetary orbits, the increase of mass of alpha particles, and the shifts of the spectra of receding stars. But it is never possible to demonstrate by a crucial test the rival truths of the Protestant and Catholic theories, simply because they deal with entities assumed to be outside the structure of determined reality. The crucial test of the two theories is presumed to occur at the Last Judgment, that is, never in this life. The theories are expressly so formulated that it is not, for example, possible to test the Eucharist by chemical analysis. The Catholic theory states that in being turned into Christ's body the bread retains all the chemical and physical properties of ordinary bread. In the same way the Protestant theory makes it pointless to test for the salvation of a soul, precisely because the soul is asserted to be completely non-material and therefore inaccessible to determinism.

No hypothesis, religious or scientific, can have any

meaning unless it can give rise to a crucial test, which will enable it to be socially compared with other hypotheses. Thought must interact with external reality to be of value or significance. Capitalist and socialist economists dispute as meaninglessly as theologians as long as they base their defences of the rival systems on justice, liberty, man's natural equality, or any other 'rights'. No one has yet devised an instrument to measure or determine justice, equality, or liberty. The Marxian can be concerned only with the structure of concrete society and he will on this basis advance socialism as a superior form of organisation at a certain period of history because it permits a more efficient use of the means of material production. This makes possible the crucial test of practice—is communism more productive than capitalism? Thus economics remains scientific because it remains in the sphere of reality and does not deal with entities that cannot be determined quantitatively. For this reason, historical materialism has not given rise to as many brands of socialism as there are theorists. It can only be opposed by an hypothesis more penetrative of reality. The 'cast-iron inflexible dogmatism' of the communist corresponds to the scientists' 'rigid' and universal adherence to a methodological principle, such as the conservation of energy, until a fresh hypothesis, capable of a crucial test, has shown the need for its expansion or modification.

When we see a scientific 'school' rent by schism, or engaged in vigorous persecution, we may assume that a certain amount of the religious spirit has entered its

science. Science has never been wholly free of it, but it has rent psychoanalysis into fragments.

Adler, Freud and Jung deal with the same mental phenomena. They are as follows : Psychic phenomena consist of innervations of some of which we, as subjects, have a privileged (subjective) view. Some of these innervations, the smallest and most recent group phylogenetically, form a group often called the consciousness, the ego, or the subject. This group appears to be more self-determined than the other groups but all affect each other and form a kind of hierarchic process. Those which do not form part of the consciousness are called unconscious. At the moment of birth the neurones capable of innervation exhibit certain specific patterns of innervation, involving certain specific somatic behaviour, as a result of internal and external stimuli. These patterns are known as 'the instincts'. But the experience resulting from the awakening of these patterns modifies, by means of a phenomenon which may be called *memory* but is not peculiar to consciousness, the patterns themselves. At any moment of time, therefore, the system as a whole has a slightly different resonance or totality of patterns as a result of previous behaviour due to the then totality of patterns. The result will be to increase with lapse of time the range and complexity of the behaviour response to reality, and the hierarchy of groups of possible innervation combinations. We say, therefore, in ordinary language, that in the course of life a man learns by experience, or, a little more technically, that his instincts are modified or conditioned by

situations. Such expressions contain a certain amount of mythology, perhaps at present unavoidable. In particular the more autonomous group called the 'consciousness', in whose language all explanations of other less autonomous groups must be phrased, will necessarily tend to write everything from its angle, and give a peculiar twist to the description. Science itself is a product of consciousness.

Experiment leads us to believe that the innervations concerned in consciousness are phylogenetically the most recent in evolution, and that the older the neurone groups, the less modifiable they are in their behaviour, i.e. the less they are able to 'learn' by 'experience'. Hence they may be described as more infantile, primitive, bestial, archaic or automatic, according to the mythological language one is adopting at the time.

In every innervation, however simple, the whole system of neurones is really concerned. If we play a chord on the piano, the strings we do not strike are as much concerned as those we do, because the chord is what it is being part of the well-tempered scale, and to the chord contribute also the wood, the air of the room, and our ears. Though consciousness deals with psychic phenomena in its own terms, yet in all conscious phenomena the innervations of the rest of the system are concerned and their innate responses, modified or unmodified, give all behaviour, including conscious phenomena, the 'ground' of their specific pattern. Hence we may say that the Unconscious modifies all

behaviour, including consciousness ; that is, that unconscious innervation and experience are a part of consciousness.

The study of this modification of the consciousness by the unconscious is naturally of great interest to our consciousness. To understand it we must know accurately the innate responses of all parts of the nervous system, and the laws of their harmony. Sometimes as a result of the temporary instability of the conscious innervation pattern (e.g. in situations of emergency or difficulty or in sleep), the tune of behaviour is called chiefly by the phylogenetically older neurones, and these, as we saw, were less teachable than the newer groups. We then have behaviour in which there is a return to the earlier and less experienced state, the so-called infantile regression. In it some of life's experience is thrown away. We may also call this behaviour instinctive.

Now these disturbances have been studied by Freud, and he has made some interesting empirical discoveries about them. He has shown how much more common they are than we suspect and has elaborated a technique for detecting them. All his discoveries have been embodied in an elaborate and ingenious myth, or series of myths. This is due partly to the fact that he has not taken his own doctrine seriously. He has not realised that, since it is consciousness which is formulating psychoanalysis, all unconscious phenomena are likely to appear as seen by consciousness, not as causal phenomena with the same physiological basis as conscious-

ness and ultimately homogeneous with it, but as wicked demons which burst into the neat ordered world of consciousness. Just as causal phenomena, such as thunder and lightning, which burst into the accustomed world of the primitive, were attributed to the arbitrary acts of deities, so unconscious 'influences', causing perturbations in the conscious world, are by Freud called by such rude names as distortion, inhibition, regression, obsession, the id, the censor, the pleasure-principle, Eros, libido, the death instinct, the reality principle, a complex, a compulsion. Freud does not perceive the implications of the physiological content of his theory. All innervation patterns consist of an innate response (instinct) modified by experience (inhibition), and thus all innervation patterns contain varying proportions of conscious and unconscious elements, connected in various ways, but all forming the one circuit, overtly visible in behaviour. Freud has accepted for this part of his theory the prejudiced view of consciousness. He treats all unconscious components of behaviour as perturbations, distortions, or interferences, just as the treble part in music might regard the bass as distortion by some primitive unconsciousness. Just as mythological and consistent a psychology as Freud's might be written from the point of view of the 'unconscious' in which, instead of the 'instincts', the 'experiences' would now play the part of energetic imprisoned demons distorting or inhibiting the stability and simple life of the innate responses. And, in fact, when Freud comes to treat civilisation and man as a whole, he does swing over to

this point of view. It is now experience or consciousness (culture) which is thwarting or distorting instinct (the unconscious). Naturally, therefore, Freud's doctrine contains a dualism which *cannot* be resolved.

But of course both consciousness and unconsciousness, as sharply distinct entities, are abstractions. In all the innervations which are part of behaviour, a varying proportion make up the group which at any time we call the consciousness or the ego. And they are not separate; consciousness is made vivid and given its content by the unconscious innervations, whose contribution we know consciously only as affect. A thought without affect is unconscious; it is simply one of the cortical neurones mnemically modified, but not at that moment affectively glowing, and therefore not part of the live circuit of unconsciousness. It is only an unconscious memory. Equally an unconscious innervation or affect without memory is not an affect at all, but simply an instinctive reflex, a tendency unmodified by experience. Consciousness and unconsciousness are not exclusive opposites, but in any hierarchy of innervations forming the behaviour of the moment we have a certain amount with high mnemonic modifiability and others with high innate predisposition, and the proportion of these may be varying. But they are in mutual relation, like the positive and negative poles of a battery activating a circuit, and it is only by abstraction that we separate out the complex called consciousness, as we might separate out the threads forming the pattern on a tapestry. The same threads pass through to the other



side and form the reverse pattern there, the unconscious, and each pattern determines the other.

Freud gave to these discoveries of his, which were founded on the previous work of Charcot, Janet, Morton Prince, and Bleuler, formulations drawn from his consciousness, without the rigorous causality demanded in physical or chemical hypotheses. As a result Freud's terminology consists of little but the abusive names coined by the consciousness for its distortion by the unconscious, or of the pitiful complaints by the unconscious of its modification by the experience embodied in conscious innervations. On the whole our sympathies will be with the consciousness, for the consciousness represents recent experience, and recent experience is the richest ; but reality reminds us that we cannot simply live in the new experience of the present. If we do, we shall be unable to advance beyond it ; we shall be trapped in the limitations of the present. We must accept the present more thoroughly than that, we must accept the past *included* in the present. That does not mean that we must accept the past as the past, for, in being included in the present, it is changed. That indeed is what each present *is* in relation to the precedent past, it is that precedent past modified by the impression of an additional experience ; and that present itself becomes the past when it is synthesised in a new present. This may sound metaphysical, and yet in the human body we see it given a 'crude' and material physiological basis. Everything below the optic thalamus represents the inherited experience of the

ancestral past. The cerebrum is the organ for storing each present as it becomes the past, and sensory perception is the process by which the past, acquiring new experience, becomes the present. This ingression gives rise to the will, to the future.

Thus though we accept consciousness as latest and richest, we must not reject the Unconscious. as the worship of the consciousness may too easily lead us to do. Those who accept consciousness only are entrapped in immediate experience, and can never progress to a richer consciousness ; just as those who ignore the past in the present in the form of history are unable to grasp the richer future, which they write only in terms of the barren present. This is the lesson of historical materialism, that the future is not contained in the present, but in the present *plus* the past.

Still less can we accept *only* the past. That is worse than the other, it is a return to outworn things, it is infantile regression. It is the path that perpetually appeals to man when, as to-day, his consciousness seems to fail him at the tasks with which he is faced, but it is the way of defeat. The Unconscious has its wisdom, certainly, for it contains the condensed experience of ages of evolution, stamped in by natural selection. Our life is built on the foundations of the somatic wisdom of unconscious innervations. None the less, the spear-point of life's insertion into the reality is the present, it is new experience and this new experience is unseizable by unconsciousness. It is consciousness.

Freudism does not accept the story of one party to

the exclusion of the other's. It accepts *both* uncritically, and so involves itself in an irreconcilable dualism. After showing how the wicked complex-devils of the Unconscious distort and obsess the consciousness, Freud goes over to the other side and paints the Unconscious as it would like to paint itself. He shows us the Instincts tortured by the inhibitions of culture, martyrs to the present and to consciousness. Yet the scientist ought in these matters to be impartial, otherwise he will never synthesise these two opposites, past and present, new and old. Freud raises only the barren trichotomy of metaphysics: (i) infantile regression (or worship of the past); (ii) conservatism (or blind acceptance of the present); (iii) dualism (the conception of present and past as eternal antagonists). Only the man who sees how the past is included in the present, can proceed to the future, child of a 'Marriage of Heaven and Hell'. They are included in the primary process of becoming, exhibited in the organism as active behaviour, in which unconscious and conscious innervations are the bass and treble of the innervation harmony in whose theme we distinguish instinct, thought, feeling and conation.

Directly Freud clothed the elements of this harmony in the fabulous and emotional symbols of psychoanalysis, Freud invited schism. Jung and Adler have invented symbols which are at least as good explanations of the same phenomena, and yet they are totally opposed to each other and to Freud's in their significance. In Adler's fable the sexual 'instinct' makes hardly any appearance, yet his 'instinct of self-preserva-

tion' explains everything as satisfactorily as Freud's 'libido'. Since separate entities—such as an instinct of self-preservation or a Censor—are fabulous descriptions of certain innate physiological responses, it is not possible to find a crucial experiment to judge between Adler and Freud. They are disputing about myths, though the myths refer to real phenomena. In the same way Grecians might have disputed about inconsistencies in rival accounts of the birth of Athene from Zeus's head. What was actually being discussed by them was the modification of behaviour by experience or—more picturesquely—the Birth of Wisdom. Since both Athene and Zeus were mere symbolic fictions, such disputes about them were wasted time. Adler, Jung and Freud have wasted much of their time in precisely the same way.

Of them all Jung is perhaps the most scientific theoretically, even if he has made the fewer empirical discoveries, because he does realise the dualism inherent in Freud's approach. But he never escapes from that dualism. On the contrary, he makes it the foundation of his theories.

. . . . .

So far we have been concerned with psychology as shown by the organism's behaviour, and have neglected the environment except as simple stimulus. Restricting our study to the organism, we regard all psychic phenomena as simply certain patterns of innervations. Some of these innervations in ourselves are consciousness. As

a whole they are part of a body's behaviour and we see part of this behaviour overtly as action, in ourselves or others. In the act of behaviour, the basic innervation patterns become modified. Thus the tune of a man's life begins with a simple hereditary phrase, on which experience plays endless variations, continually increasing in richness and subtlety. This is part of the fact that a man's life is lived in Reality, whose nature it is that each new present includes the previous past, so growing increasingly in complexity.

But all behaviour is interaction between body and stimuli from outside, or between one part of the body and another. The organism never behaves alone ; there is always an ' other ', the environment, which is a party to its behaviour. Moreover the environment too has its history, for it is subject to time. Thus it is never the same environment, and each transaction the organism has with it is subtly different because since the previous transaction it has become more full of history. Hence the behaviour of the organism is a counter-point, in which the organism furnishes one part and the environment the other part. We may for purposes of analysis consider the melody of each separately, but actually behaviour is not a melody but a harmony. Thus the harmony of the psyche is itself a reflection of the harmony of the body's being in reality. The treble of the consciousness is a reflection of the melody of the environment ; the bass of the unconsciousness is a reflection of the melody of the organism. The fundamental principle of physics is that each action has an

equal and opposite reaction. Thus, after each act of behaviour, in which organism and environment interact, environment has affected organism and organism environment, and the resulting positions of each are different. Indeed that is why there is history, for the environment itself is simply a collection of mutually-interacting bodies. In between the act of an organism one moment and its act the next, the environment has changed, simply because the elements of which the environment is composed have interacted and changed each other.

Now of all known organisms, the human organism is the most elaborate in its melody and the most sensitive in its reaction to intercourse with reality. It is the organism which learns most from behaviour, from experience. Nothing changes so quickly as the human organism. In the same way the social environment, because the organisms of which it consists are chiefly human beings, also changes most quickly in between the acts of a human being. The study of this dialectic change is psychology from the point of view of the individual ; but from the point of view of the sum of human beings it is sociology or history, and in its causal statement it must include all portions of the environment with which human beings interact, even the fixed stars. But since in the short periods usually studied, cosmical conditions do not change importantly, they may be neglected. They might become important in a study of humanity which included the Ice Ages. Of primary interest to history are however the material

elements in the environment that do change rapidly in the periods generally studied, i.e. machines, transport, cities, and, in brief, all the social relations arising from social production, for the change in the organism will necessarily be related to these changing features in its environment. The organism does not enter consciously or of its own will into these relations. They are prior and determine its consciousness and will. It is in fact impossible to study psychology without a background of sociology. If one does do so, either it is impossible to find the causal connexion in the change of the human psyche, or else one accepts the human psyche as unchanging and all laws discovered from a study of contemporary psyches seem true for all time.

As it happens, no modern school of psychology has ever studied social relations as primary, as conditioning the consciousness which is generated by them. None study concrete society and its non-psychical basis. No modern school of psychology has ever yet got so far as to formulate its basic approach to the environment of the psyche it studies, continuous interaction with which is the law of psychic life.

Freud approaches his psychological problems with the assumptions of a bourgeois idealist, to whom nothing exists of reality save an unchanging backcloth before which the ideas play their parts. It is true that these ideas are now rather like the 'ruling passions' of older philosophers, and have been given the name of 'the instincts' or 'Libido', but the story is still the same fabulous drama, in which are performed the 'miracles'

of inhibitions, sublimation, cathexis, narcissism, transformation and displacement, by those good and bad fairies, the censor, the ego, the super-ego and the id. There are even cannibal instincts and incest instincts, though it staggers the imagination of the biologist to infer how these variations evolved and became hereditary. There is no causality.

Freud imagines a pleasure-principle attempting to gain freedom for its pleasures within the bounds of the prison house of reality. Beyond those bounds of causality we must not stray, Freud admits, but inside their ever-contracting boundaries there appears to be true freedom. It is a fine fable. The instincts, like bourgeois revolutionaries, desperately attempt to gratify themselves, oppressed by the tyrant Reality's laws. Has such a conception any place in science ?

Freud, like all bourgeois intellectuals, like Eddington, Russell and Wells, cannot lose his faith that there is a separate cell called liberty, mysteriously existing in the granite of scientific causality. Scientific thought is continually (it is supposed) contracting the dimensions of this chamber of little ease, but still it exists.

In particular, these thinkers suppose that man is more free, more at liberty, the more he is free from the pressure of culture, consciousness, and social organisation. Russell, Eddington, Freud, and Wells are alike in this supposition, which, carried (as they do not carry it) to the logical conclusion, means that the only beings with real liberty are the unconscious brutes.

But the truth is, the world is not a prison house of



reality in which man has been allotted by some miracle a honey cell of pleasure. Man is a part of reality, in constant relation with it, and the progress of consciousness, in so far as it increases his knowledge of causality, increases his freedom. In the same way, civilisation increases his freedom, in so far as it increases his causal control over reality, including himself. In this last, in the self-control of men as compared with their environmental control by machines, we are least advanced, and this is precisely because psychology, which would show us how to control ourselves, is always trying to evade causality. Science does not *seem* to be telling man about freedom. On the contrary, it seems only to be discovering cast-iron laws, of whose existence and rigidity he did not guess. But is an animal in a cage free because it does not realise it is a cage? Will it not only become free when it realises that a locked cage completely restricts its movements and that to be free it must *necessarily* unlock the door?

Bourgeois civilisation is built on this rock, that complete freedom consists in complete personal anarchy, and that man is *naturally* completely free. This Rousseaudism is found distorting all bourgeois thought. Freud cannot help visualising civilisation as the enslavement of the completely free instincts by culture.

Hence the honest bourgeois is always either pessimistic or religious. Man must have some conscious social organisation to exist socially (police, judges, factories, education), and all these seem to him so many limits to his freedom, not because of the *imperfection* of the

organisation, which is the communist criticism, but because there is organisation at all. Thus to the bourgeois civilisation seems damned by its premises and there is no hope in this life of attaining freedom. All organisation, all consciousness, all thought eventually seem to the bourgeois intellectual the corruption or inhibition or repression of the completely free natural man ; but this natural man is an anthropoid ape, for man without society is a brute.

Can we talk of the inhibition or repression of that which is not free ? And are the instincts free or are they, as we see so clearly in the insect, blind mechanical enslavements, deaf to individual learning, heeding only the slow ancestral experience of the species ? Then society, creating by its 'inhibitions' and 'repressions' *consciousness*, is leading the instincts on the path not of slavery but of freedom. To call, as Freud does, that which frees the enslaved instincts 'inhibitions' or 'repression' is prejudiced.

Freud sees in the evolution of each individual psyche nothing but the drama of the instincts fighting among themselves, and so giving rise to the repressions of culture. He sees in culture nothing but the projection of this drama into the environment, on a collective scale : 'And now,' he says, 'it seems to me, the meaning of the evolution of culture is no longer a riddle to us. It must present to us the struggle between Eros and Death, between the instincts of life and the instincts of destruction, as it works itself out in the human species.' Thus to him culture is autonomously

psychic, and without internal causality, just because it has no external connection. The material environment is ignored.

In another passage he attributes the organisations of society to the identifications of all individuals with each other through the father, thus explaining both social cohesion and leadership. And he adds (explaining our present discontents): 'This danger (i.e. social discontent) is most menacing where the social forces of cohesion consist predominantly of identifications of the individuals of the group with one another, whilst leading personalities fail to acquire the significance that should fall to them in the process of group-formation.' Here bourgeois idealism, long before the advent of Hitler, unwittingly writes the charter of barbarous Fascism, Fuhrership, and the Corporate State. Withdrawing from the future, Fascism appeals to a savage past for salvation. By a strange irony, Freud becomes the apologist of the Fascist philosophy which rejects him, which burns his books, and seems repugnant to him. Yet this is the irony of all bourgeois culture, that because it is based on a contradiction, it gives rise to the opposite of what it desires. It desires freedom and individual expression, but, because it believes freedom is to be found in abolition of social organisation, it gives rise to all the tyrannies and blind crippling necessities of the modern world. Freudism, attempting to cure civilisation of its instinctive distortions, points the way to Nazism.

Is Freud, then, an ally of Fascism, whose psycho-

logical mechanism in the individual his theory explains and condemns? In one sense, yes! As bourgeois consciousness breaks down before new reality, it is aware of its failure and this sense of failure is itself a disintegrating force. It is part of the rôle of Freud to make overt the rottenness in bourgeois social relations, but there are no 'absolutely hopeless' situations, and bourgeois culture defends itself from these humiliating awarenesses by the mechanism of barbaric pseudo-religious constructs, such as that of Fascist ideology. When consciousness reveals its inadequacy to a situation, one can either advance to a wider consciousness which will include the new situation that brought about the crisis, or one can regress to a former solution of a similar problem in the childhood of the individual or the nation. This is the mechanism of neuroses. But this is no solution, for the old situation is not the same situation, and the mind that faces it too has changed. So one gets only a false and pathological infantilism, full of illusion and phantasy. Freudism can point this out but, because of its lack of a scientific basis, it cannot show the way to attain the wider consciousness. Thus, after all, it is not a therapy, it is only a diagnosis. The analyst vainly exposes the regressive nature of the neurotic's solution, if he cannot himself provide a better solution. And Freud cannot. We can only cast out error with truth, and Freud had no new truth to offer, only a fairy-tale recording the breakdown of bourgeois civilisation as seen in its own mythological terms.

In answer to criticism of Freud's mythology, it has often been urged that Freudism is a therapy, not a science. Such defenders admit that emotively-charged concepts such as libido, the censor, the Œdipus complex and inhibition have no place in a scientific hypothesis. But (they argue) the neurosis is an emotional crisis, and the neurotic can only be cured emotionally. It is no use talking to him about conditioned reflexes. His emotions must be stirred, and this justifies the myths of psychoanalysis, by which truths are conveyed to him fabulously but vividly.

But just because Freudism is not a science, it fails as a therapy. Granted that the neurotic must be touched emotionally, are individual psychoanalysts really arrogant enough to believe that the enormous, creative force of emotion, the dynamism of society, can be directed by them, as individuals, and by means of such arid concepts as those of Freudism? Emotion, in all its vivid colouring, is the creation of ages of culture acting on the blind unfeeling instincts. All art, all education, all day-to-day social experience, draw it out of the heart of the human genotype and direct and shape its myriad phenomena. Only society as a whole can really direct this force in the individual. To imagine that one psychoanalyst can shape it is to believe that one can bring down the houses of London with a shout. Could any discipline rooted in scientific causality have made so rash a misjudgment of the powers of the individual, as to believe that the mighty social force of emotion could be harnessed by 'Trans-

ference of libido ' to the earnest, middle-aged and bald physician ? At least the Victorian heroine who wished to reform the sinner by a good woman's love had personal charm and unlimited opportunity.

The innate responses of an organism, the so-called instincts, as such are unconscious, mechanical, and unaffected by experience. Psychology therefore is not concerned with them, for they are the material of physiology. Psychology, in its study of consciousness or unconsciousness, can only have for its material all those psychic contents that results from the *modification* of responses by experience. It is this material that changes, that develops, that is distinctively human, that is of importance, and psychology should and in practice does ignore the *unchanging* instinctual basis as a cause. It concerns itself with the variable, which changes not only from age to age but from individual to individual and in an individual from hour to hour.

Reflexes are conditioned by experience, by action upon the environment. In man the environment consists of society, and action of education, daily work, daily life, what man sees, eats, hears, handles, travels in, co-operates in, loves, reverences, is repelled by—the whole fabric of social relations. These in the developing instinctual organism, produce the psyche, give consciousness its contents and the unconscious its trend, and make man what he is. Consciousness is the organ of social adaptation, but society is not composed of consciousnesses.

It is true that each contact of organism with the

environment not only affects the organism but also affects the environment. But in studying any one psyche, which is the task of individual psychology, we see on the one hand a naked genotype, dumb, ignorant and without tradition, whereas, on the other hand, forming its environment, we see not only millions of other individuals but the formulation in bricks and mortar, in social organisations, in religions, sciences, laws and language of the experience of æons of human activity. Consequently the action of the organism upon this mass of consciousness is minute compared with its reaction upon the organism, except in those cases where, owing to its own instability, the smallest touch is already sufficient to send it over violently into a new position. Such touches are administered by Marx. But in formulating a scientific psychology as in formulating a mechanics, the spectacular side is of no importance compared to the underlying causal laws, good for the ordinary as well as the exceptional event. The fact that in certain conditions of instability a cricket ball could cause the sun to explode, does not justify us in imagining that cricket balls exert forces greater than suns. In psychology, as in mechanics, the reaction of a body on its cosmic environment can be neglected, as compared to the effect of the world on the body.

Thus psychology must be extracted from sociology, not *vice versa*. For sociology, if scientific (and the only school of scientific sociology was founded by Marx), already includes the conscious formulations and the

material accretions, arising from the dialectic of social relations, which provide the environment of the developing infant psyche. These are the social relations into which the organism enters irrespective of its will. The single organism is a slave to its environment, just as the particle is a slave to time and space, in spite of the fact that the social environment is composed of the activities of human organisms and time and space are the sum of the relations of particles. We must establish sociology before we can establish psychology, just as we must establish the laws of time and space before we can treat satisfactorily of a single particle. This is not to say that psychology and sociology are the same. Psychology has a province of tremendous importance to the human race, but it can only be studied scientifically on a background of more general laws, just as biology is impossible without the prior laws of physics and chemistry. Sociology is the foundation of psychology.

This Freud has failed to see. To him all mental phenomena are simply the interaction and mutual distortion of the instincts, of which culture and social organisations are a projection, and yet this social environment, produced by the instincts, is just what tortures and inhibits the instincts. Freud is powerless to explain causally the intricate and rich movement of cultural development, because he is in the position of a man trying to lift himself off the ground by his bootlaces. All this rich culture, its art, its science, and its institutions, is to Freud merely a projection of man's



instinctive turmoil into unchanging reality, and yet this projection continually changes, although the individual instincts and reality remain the same. Why do social relations change? Why do psyches alter from age to age? Freud, like all modern psychologists who base themselves on the unchanging instincts of the genotype, is powerless to explain the only thing that interests psychology, the thing that *constitutes* psychology, the perpetual variation and development of the mental phenotype. Like Plato's men in the cave, psychoanalysts try to deduce from shadows what is happening outside. Looking into the psyche, they are mystified by the movements caused by currents in outer reality and mistake them for the distortions of the cunning and oppressed instincts, or for the interventions of mysterious 'forces' that are generated by the instincts. Seeing the shadows make a circular *détour* round one place, they assume this to be an eternal law of the psyche, the Œdipus complex. It does not occur to them that it may be due to an obstacle in the environment, round which the shadows have to move, and that the complex will alter if the obstacle is moved.

Unable to see psychology causally simply because they cannot see it sociologically, Freudism can attain to no psychology beyond bourgeois psychology. They never advance beyond the view-point of the 'individual in civil society'. Whether they study primitive man or lay down general laws of the soul, it is always with ideas formulated from a bourgeois

psyche studying other bourgeois psyches, and so the instincts play always the part of splendid and free brutes, crippled by the repressions of a cruel culture. It is true that to-day the system of production relations is crippling man's splendid powers, but Freudian 'libido' in bondage to 'repression' is a very inadequate myth to convey this reality. It is a pale subjective reflection of the vital objective situation. The old bourgeois symbol of 'original sin' is better. The psyche, a creation of its environment, becomes to Freud, who ignores the environment or is ignorant of its mode of change, a creature whom mysterious self-generated entities force to become an unhappy bourgeois psyche. It is as if a man, seeing a row of trees bent in various ways by the prevailing winds, were without studying the relation between growth and environment to deduce that a mysterious complex in trees caused them always to lean as the result of a death instinct attracting them to the ground, while eternal Eros bade them spring up vertically. Freud's error is so much the worse because the psyche, studied by psychology, is far more the result of environmental conditions than the whole tree. The psyche is the organ of adaptation to social relations, therefore for psychology the laws determining social relations are fundamental.

Thus Freudism, like all 'individual' psychologies, breaks down in the most elementary scientific desideratum, that of causality. Though evolved as a therapy, it turns out to be the creed of undiluted pessimism.

If we do not know the laws of our environment, we cannot know ourselves, and if we cannot know ourselves, we can never be free. If we are full of bitterness, and this bitterness is the outcome of an inevitable instinctual strife, our hearts can never be sweetened. If we owe no vital part of our consciousness to our environment, it is of no value to change it. 'New skies,' said Horace, 'the exile finds, but the same heart.'—If we regard the categories of the present as final, and the present is full of despair and neurosis, of slumps and wars, we can never pass beyond them to a successful issue. At the best, like the neurotic, we can only return to a former successful solution at an infantile level—to feudalism, barbarian group-leadership, *unanisme*, Fascism. Indeed Jung invokes as our only salvation this very regression, appealing to the old barbarous mythologies to come to our aid. Freud at least has the courage to spurn this way of escape, and so, like a Roman stoic, in decaying classical civilisation he treads the die-hard path, and drinks the cup of poison to its dregs.

This conception, apparently refined, of the last fatal battle of the gods, is really barbarous, and the first step in the path to Hindoo resignation and vegetable sanctity. Spengler is the prophet of this resignation to one's own limitations :

'Only dreamers believe that there is a way out. We are born in this time and must bravely follow the path to the destined end. There is no other way. Our duty is to hold on to the last position, without

hope, without rescue.' Freud, too, in *The Future of an Illusion* and *Group Psychology*, sees little hope for culture. Yet he is, in spite of this, more optimistic than the Communist in that he believes that while society rushes downhill, the psychoanalyst, as an individual, can do what all society fails to do, and cure the neurotic produced by modern conditions. This contradictory belief that the individual can do what the sum of individuals, of which he is one, cannot do, is characteristic of all these bourgeois pessimists, and makes it difficult to take their pessimism as completely sincere.

It is generally believed that the relation between environment and individual is correctly expressed in Adler, exponent of Individual psychology, and Freud's former pupil. Let us therefore hear him :

'In a civilisation where one man is the enemy of the other—for this is what our whole industrial system means—demoralisation is ineradicable, for demoralisation and crime are the by-products of the struggle for existence as known to our industrialised civilisation.'

Surely, it will be said, Adler has escaped from the bourgeois cage. Surely he has realised that it is the environment, bourgeois capitalism, that produces our present discontents, and not the struggle-for-existence of the organism, pushed on by its instincts, that produces bourgeois capitalism. True, he here confuses industrialisation (machine technique) with the competition of capitalism which gave rise to it, but is

separable from it. He is confounding productive forces and productive relations. Yet, at least (it will be urged), the root of the matter is in him. Let us therefore continue the quotation and see his remedy for this 'ineradicable' demoralisation: 'To limit and do away with this demoralisation, a chair of curative pedagogy should be established.'

This is the logic of Individual Psychology! Man's demoralisation, his neurosis, his discontent, his despair, are correctly seen to be due to his environment—capitalist social relations. To cure it, however, his environment is not to be changed, for the environment is always in all bourgeois economics and sociology and in spite of history presumed to be unchangeable. Rather, man is to lift himself off the ground by his bootlaces; to take pedagogic pills to cure the earthquake of capitalism's collapse. The pill takes various forms: It is a chair of curative pedagogy with Adler. With Freud the sufferers, if rich enough, are to go to an analyst for a course of treatment. This is impracticable, Jung realises, for the poorer classes, so we must re-introduce the old myths, of the archetypal hero swallowed by the giant fish ('Psychology of the Unconscious'.) These are the doctors who stand by the bedside of society in its most gigantic agony! Is it surprising that the criticism of the Marxist sometimes contains a tinge of contempt?

The Marxian has been often reproached for his antagonism to psychoanalysis. It is even asserted that the founder, it is said, has no bourgeois illusions; he

is a thoroughgoing materialist. But he is not. Freud is still possessed by the focal bourgeois illusion, that the individual stands opposed to an unchanging society which trammels him, and within whose constraints his instincts attempt freely to develop the rich and varied phenomena of the psyche. Because of that illusion Freud thinks society itself is doomed to frustration, and yet thinks that one individual can cure another. He is never able to see that just as man must have a fulcrum outside him to lift himself, so the individual must act on the environment which created his consciousness in order to change it. We owe much to Freud for his symbolic presentation of the discord between the deep and recent layers of men's minds ; but he cannot heal us, for he cannot even teach us that first truth, that we must change the world in order to change ourselves.

The revolt of all the instincts against current social relations, which to Freud is everything and obscures his whole horizon, so that he writes all psychology, art, religion, culture, politics and history in terms of this revolt, is only one of many signals to the Marxian that, behind the decayed façade, a new environment is being realised and in man's troubled soul a wider consciousness, too, awaits delivery.

## VIII

### LIBERTY

#### A STUDY IN BOURGEOIS ILLUSION

MANY will have heard a broadcast by H. G. Wells in which (commenting on the Soviet Union) he described it as a 'great experiment which has but half fulfilled its promise', it is still a 'land without mental freedom'. There are also many essays of Bertrand Russell in which this philosopher explains the importance of liberty, how the enjoyment of liberty is the highest and most important goal of man. Fisher claims that the history of Europe during the last two or three centuries is simply the struggle for liberty. Continually and variously by artists, scientists, and philosophers alike, liberty is thus praised and man's right to enjoy it imperiously asserted.

I agree with this. Liberty does seem to me the most important of all generalised goods—such as justice, beauty, truth—that come so easily to our lips. And yet when freedom is discussed a strange thing is to be noticed. These men—artists, careful of words, scientists, investigators of the entities denoted by words, philosophers, scrupulous about the relations between words and entities—never define precisely what they mean by

freedom. They seem to assume that it is quite a clear concept, whose definition everyone would agree about.

Yet who does not know that liberty is a concept about whose nature men have quarrelled perhaps more than about any other? The historic disputes concerning predestination, Karma, Free-Will, Moira, salvation by faith or works, determinism, Fate, Kismet, the categorical imperative, sufficient grace, occasionalism, Divine Providence, punishment and responsibility have all been about the nature of man's freedom of will and action. The Greeks, the Romans, the Buddhists, the Mahomedans, the Catholics, the Jansenists, and the Calvinists, have each had different ideas of liberty. Why, then, do all these bourgeois intellectuals assume that liberty is a clear concept, understood in the same way by all their hearers, and therefore needing no definition? Russell, for example, has spent his life finding a really satisfactory definition of number and even now it is disputed whether he has been successful. I can find in his writings no clear definition of what he means by liberty. Yet most people would have supposed that men are far more in agreement as to what is meant by a number, than what is meant by liberty.

This indefinite use of the words can only mean either that they believe the meaning of the word invariant in history or that they use it in the contemporary bourgeois sense. If they believe the meaning invariant, it is strange that men have disputed so often about freedom. These intellectuals must surely be incapable of such a blunder. They must mean liberty as men in



their situation experience it. That is, they must mean by liberty to have no more restrictions imposed on them than they endure at that time. They do not—these Oxford dons or successful writers—want, for example, the restrictions of Fascism, that is quite clear. That would not be liberty. But at present, thank God, they are reasonably free.

Now this conception of liberty is superficial, for not all their countrymen are in the same situation. A, an intellectual with a good education, in possession of a modest income, with not too uncongenial friends, unable to afford a yacht, which he would like, but at least able to go to the winter sports, considers this (more or less) freedom. He would like that yacht, but still—he can write against communism or Fascism or the existing system. Let us for the moment grant that A is free. I propose to analyse this statement more deeply in a moment, and show that it is partial. But let us for the moment grant that A enjoys liberty.

Is B free? B is the sweated non-union shop-assistant of Houndsditch, working seven days of the week. He knows nothing of art, science, or philosophy. He has no culture except a few absurd prejudices, his elementary school education saw to that. He believes in the superiority of the English race, the King's wisdom and loving-kindness to his subjects, the real existence of God, the Devil, Hell, and Sin, and the wickedness of sexual intercourse unless palliated by marriage. His knowledge of world events is derived from the *News of the World*, on other days he has no time to

read the papers. He believes that when he dies he will (with luck) enter into eternal bliss. At present, however, his greatest dread is that, by displeasing his employer in some trifle, he may become unemployed.

B's trouble is plainly lack of leisure in which to cultivate freedom. C does not suffer from this. He is an unemployed middle-aged man. He is free for 24 hours a day. He is free to go anywhere—in the streets and parks, and in the Museums. He is allowed to think of anything—the Einstein theory, the Frege definition of classes, or the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Regrettably enough, he does none of these things. He quarrels with his wife, who calls him a good-for-nothing waster, and with his children, who because of the Means Test have to pay his rent, and with his former friends, because they can enjoy pleasures he cannot afford. Fortunately he is free to remove himself from existence, and this one afternoon, when his wife is out and there is plenty of money in the gas-meter, he will do.

A is free. Are B and C? I assume that A will reply that B and C are not free. If A asserts that B and C do enjoy real liberty, most of us, without further definition, will know what to think of A's idea of liberty. But a Wells, a Forster, or a Russell would doubtless agree, as vehemently as us, that this is not liberty, but a degrading slavery to environment. He will say that to free B and C we must raise them to A's level, the level, let us say, of the Oxford don. Like the Oxford don, B and C must have leisure and

a modest income with which to enjoy the good things and the good ideas of the world.

But how is this to be brought about? Bourgeois social relations are what we have now. No one denies that the dynamic motive of such relations is private profit. Here bourgeois economists and Marxists are agreed. Moreover, if causality has any meaning, and unless we are to throw all scientific method overboard, current economic relations and the unfreedom of B and C must be causally inter-related.

We have, then, bourgeois social relations on the one hand, and these varying degrees of unfreedom—A, B, and C—on the other hand, interconnected as cause and effect. So far, either might be cause, for we have not yet decided whether mental states arise from social relations, or *vice versa*. But as soon as we ask how action is to solve the problem, we see which is primary. It is useless to give B, by means of lectures and picture galleries, opportunity for understanding philosophy or viewing masterpieces of art. He has no time to acquire, before starting work, the taste for them or after starting work the time to gratify it. Nor is C free to enjoy the riches of bourgeois culture as long as his whole existence is clouded by his economic position. It is circumstances that are imprisoning consciousness, not *vice versa*. It is not because B and C are unenlightened that they are members of the working class, but because they are members of the working class, they are unenlightened. And Russell, who writes *In Praise of Idleness*, praises rightly, for he is clever because

he is idle and bourgeois, not idle and bourgeois because he is clever.

We now see the cause and effect of the situation. We see that it is not this freedom and unfreedom which produce bourgeois social relations, but that bourgeois social relations alike give rise to these two extremes, the freedom of the idle bourgeois, and the unfreedom of the proletarian worker. It is plain that this effect, if undesirable, can only be changed by changing the cause.

Thus the intellectual is faced with another problem, like that when he had to define more precisely who enjoyed the liberty he regarded as contemporary. Does he wish that there should exist for ever these two states of captivity and freedom, of misery and happiness? Can he enjoy a freedom which is sustained by the same cause as the workers' unfreedom? For if not, he must advance further, and say, 'bourgeois social relations must be changed'. Change they will, precisely because of this unfreedom they increasingly generate; but to-day the intellectual must decide whether his will will be part of the social forces making for change, or vainly pitted against them.

But how are bourgeois social relations to be changed? Not by a mere effort of the will, for we saw that the mind was made by social relations, not *vice versa*. It is matter, the quantitative foundation of qualitative ideology, that must be changed. It is not enough to argue and convince. Work must be done. The environment must be altered.

Science shows us how. We achieve our wants always, not by the will alone, not by merely wishing them into being, but with action aided by cognition, by utilising the physical laws of reality. We move mountains, not by the mere movement of desire, but because we understand the rigidly determined laws of kinetics, hydraulics, and electrical engineering and can guide our actions by them. We attain freedom—that is, the fulfilment of our will—by obedience to the laws of reality. Observance of these laws is simple ; it is the discovery of them that is the difficulty, and this is the task of science.

Thus, the task of defining liberty becomes still harder. It is not so easy after all to establish even a contemporary definition of liberty. Not only has the intellectual already had to decide to change bourgeois social relations, but he must now find out the laws of motion of society, and fit social relations into a causal scheme. It is not enough to want to be free ; it is also necessary to know.

Only one scientific analysis of the law of motion of social relations exists, that of Marxism. For the understanding of how, physically, at the material level of social being, quantitative movements of capital, of matter, of *stuff*, provide the causal predictive basis of society, and pass via social relations into the qualitative changes of mind, will, and ideology, it is necessary to refer the bourgeois intellectual to Marx, Engels, Plekhanov, Lenin and Bukharin. Let us suppose that he has now done this and returns again to the difficult pursuit of liberty.

His causal conception of society will now enable him to realise that the task of making social relations produce liberty is as rigidly conditioned by reality as the task of making matter fulfil his desire in the form of machines. All matter—machinery, capital, men—and the relations which they exhibit in society—can only move in accordance with causal laws. This involves first that the old relations must be broken down, just as a house must be pulled down if we would entirely rebuild it, and the transition, pulling up and putting down, must follow certain laws. We cannot pull up the foundation first, or build the roof before the walls.

This transitional stage involves the alteration of all the adherences between humans and the capital, machinery and materials, which mediate social relations. These must no longer adhere to individual persons—the bourgeois class—but to all members of society. This change is not a mere change of ownership, for it also involves that no individuals can derive profit from ownership without working. The goods are not destined to go the round of the market—the profit movement—but directly into use—the use movement. Moreover, this involves that all the visible institutions depending on private profit relations—laws, church, bureaucracy, judiciary, army, police, education—must be pulled down and rebuilt. The *bourgeoisie* cannot do this, for it is by means of these very institutions—private property (the modest income), law, university, civil service, privileged position, etc.—

that they attain their freedom. To expect them to destroy these relations on which, as we saw, their freedom, and the workers' unfreedom, depend, is to ask them to go in quest of captivity, which, since liberty is what all men seek, they will not do. But the opposite is the case with the unfree, with the proletariat. The day they go in search of liberty, they revolt. The bourgeois, fighting for his liberty, must necessarily find himself in antagonism to the non-bourgeois, also fighting for liberty. The eventual issue of this struggle is due to the fact that capitalist economy, as it develops, makes ever narrower the class which really owns liberty, until the day comes when the intellectual, the doctor, the petty bourgeois, the clerk, and the peasant, realise that they too are not after all free. And they see that the fight of the proletariat is their fight.

What, to the proletarian, is liberty—the extermination of those bourgeois institutions and relations which hold them in captivity—is necessarily compulsion and restraint to the bourgeois, just as the old bourgeois liberty generated non-liberty for the worker. The two notions of liberty are irreconcilable. Once the proletariat is in power, all attempts to re-establish bourgeois social relations will be attacks on proletarian liberty, and will therefore be repulsed as fiercely as men repulse all attacks on their liberty. This is the meaning of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and why with it there is censorship, ideological acerbity, and all the other devices developed by the bourgeois in the

evolution of the coercive State which secures his freedom.

There is, however, one vital difference. Bourgeois social relations, generating the liberty of the bourgeois and the non-liberty of the proletarian, depend on the existence of both freedom and unfreedom for their continuance. The bourgeois could not enjoy his idleness without the labour of the worker, nor the worker remain in a bourgeois relationship without the coercive guidance and leadership of the bourgeois. Thus the liberty of the few is, in bourgeois social relations, built on the unfreedom of the many. The two Nations dwell in perpetual antagonism. But after the dispossession of the bourgeoisie, the antagonism between the expropriated and therefore unfree bourgeois, and the inheriting and therefore free proletariat, is only temporary. For the owners of the means of production, being also the workers of that means, do not need the existence of an expropriated class. When, therefore, the transition is complete, and the bourgeois class is either absorbed or has died out, there is no longer an unfree compelled class. That is what is meant by the 'withering away' of the State into a classless society, after the transitional period such as is now taking place in Russia.

This, stated in its simplest terms, is the causal process whereby bourgeois social relations can change into new social relations not generating a mass of unfreedom as the opposite pole to a little freedom. We have purposely made it simple. A fuller discussion, such as



Marx gives, would make clearer the fluid interpenetrating nature of the process ; how it is brought about causally by capitalist economy itself, which cannot stand still, but clumps continually into greater centralisation, giving rise to imperialistic wars, which man will not forever tolerate, and to viler and viler cash relations, filling men with hate, which will one day become hate for the system. And as capitalism perpetrates these enormities, the cause of revolt, it gives the proletariat the means of revolt, by making them unite, become more conscious and organised, so that, when the time of revolt comes, they have both the solidarity and executive ability needed to take over the administration of the bourgeois property. At the same time bourgeois social relations reveal that even their freedom is not real freedom, that bourgeois freedom is almost as imprisoning to its enjoyers as the worker's unfreedom. And thus the *bourgeoisie* does not find itself as a solid class, arrayed against the proletariat, but there are divisions in its own ranks, a few at first, and then more and more. The revolution takes place as soon as the proletariat are sufficiently organised by their fight against bourgeois social relations to co-operate, sufficiently harried by their growing unfreedom to demand a new world at all costs ; and when, on the other side, as a result of the developing contradictions of capitalism, the bourgeois themselves have lost their grip.

Let us, therefore, go deeper, and examine more closely the true nature of bourgeois freedom. Are

H. G. Wells, Bertrand Russell, E. M. Forster, you, reader, and I, really free? Do we enjoy even mental freedom? For if we do not enjoy that, we certainly do not enjoy physical freedom.

Bertrand Russell is a philosopher and a mathematician. He takes the method of science seriously, and applies it to various fields of thought. He believes that thoughts are simply special arrangements of matter, even though he calls matter mind-stuff. He agrees that to every psychism corresponds a neurism, that life is a special chemical phenomenon, just as thought is a special biological phenomenon. He is not taken in by the nonsense of entelechies and pure memory.

Why then does he refrain from applying these categories, used everywhere else, to the concept of liberty? In what sense can he believe man to be ever completely free? What meaning can he attach to the word freedom? He rightly detects the idealistic hocus-pocus of smuggling God into science as the Life-Force, entelechy, or the first cause, for the sleight of hand it is. But his liberty is a kind of God; something which he accepts on faith, somehow intervening in the affairs of the universe, and unconnected with causality. Russell's liberty and his philosophy live in different worlds. He has made theology meet science, and seen that theology is a barbarous relic. But he has not performed the last act of integration; he has not asked science's opinion of this belief that the graduate of one of the better universities, with a moderate income, considerable intelligence, and some leisure, is really free.

It is not a question of whether man has in some mysterious fashion free will. For if that were the problem, all men either would or would not have free will, and therefore all men would or would not have liberty. If freedom consists in having free will, and men have free will, we can will as freely under a Fascist, or proletarian, as under a bourgeois Government. But everyone admits that there are degrees of liberty. In what therefore does this difference in liberty consist?

Although liberty does not then depend on free will, it will help us to understand liberty if we consider what is the freedom of the will. Free will consists in this, that man is conscious of the motive that dictates his action. Without this consciousness of antecedent motive, there is no free will. I raise my hand to ward off a blow. The blow dictated my action; none the less, I was conscious that I wanted to ward off the blow; I willed to do so. My will was free; it was an act of my will. There was a cause; but I was conscious of a free volition. And I was conscious of the cause, of the blow.

In sleep a tickling of the soles of the feet actuates the plantar reflex. Such an action we call involuntary. Just as the warding movement was elicited by an outside stimulus, so was the bending of the leg. None the less, we regard the second as unfree, *involuntary*. It was not preceded by a conscious motive. Nor were we conscious of the cause of our action. We thus see that free will exists in so far as we are conscious of an antecedent motive in our mind, regarded as the immediate cause

of action. If this motive, or act of will, is itself free, and not forced, we must also be in turn conscious of the antecedent motive that produced it. Free will is not therefore the opposite of causality ; it is on the contrary a special and late aspect of causality, it is the *consciousness* of causality. That is why man naturally fits all happenings outside him in a causal frame ; because he is conscious of causality in himself. Otherwise it would be a mystery if man, experiencing only uncausality in free will, should assume, as he does, that all other things are linked by causality. If, however, he is only assuming that other objects obey the same laws as he does, both the genesis and success of causality as a cognitive framework for reality are explicable.

Causality and freedom thus are aspects of each other. Freedom is the consciousness of necessity. The universe as a whole is completely free, because that which is not free is determined by something else outside it. But all things are, by definition, contained in the universe, therefore the universe is determined by nothing but itself. But every individual thing in the universe is determined by other things, because the universe is material. This materiality is not 'given' in the definition of the universe, but is exactly what science establishes when it explains the world actively and positively.

Thus the only absolute freedom, like the only absolute truth, is the universe itself. But parts of the universe have varying degrees of freedom, according to their degrees of self-determination. In self-determination, the causes are within the thing itself ; thus, in the sensation

of free will, the antecedent cause of an action is the conscious thought of an individual, and since the action is also that of the individual, we talk of freedom, because there is self-determination.

The freedom of free will can only be relative. It is characteristic of the more recently evolved categories that they contain more freedom. The matter of which man is composed is in spatio-temporal relation with all other matter in the universe, and its position in space and time is only to a small degree self-determined. Man's perception, however, is to a less degree in relation with the rest of the universe ; it is a more exclusive kind of perception that sees little not in the immediate vicinity of man, or in which it is not interested, and it is largely moulded by memory, that is, by internal causes. Hence it is freer, more self-determined, than the spatio-temporal relations of dead matter. Man's consciousness is still more self-determined, particularly in its later developments, such as conscious volition.

Man constantly supposes that he is freer than he is. Freudian research has recently shown that events at the level of being—i.e. unconscious physiological events—may give rise to disturbances which usurp conscious functions. In such circumstances a man may not be conscious of the motives of his actions, although he believes he is. He is therefore unfree, for his will's determination arises from events outside consciousness. An example is the neurotic. The neurotic is unfree. He attains freedom by attaining self-determination, that is, by making conscious, motives which before were un-

conscious. Thus he becomes captain of his soul. I am not now discussing the validity of the various methods by which this knowledge is obtained, or what neurological meaning we are to give to the Freudian symbolism. I agree with this basic assumption of Freudian therapy, that man always obtains more freedom, more self-determination, by a widening of consciousness or, in other words, by an increase of knowledge. In the case of his own mind, man, by obtaining a knowledge of its causality, and the necessity of its functioning, obtains more freedom. Here too freedom is seen to be a special form of determinism, namely, the consciousness of it.

But man cannot simply sit and contemplate his own mind in order to grasp its causality. His body, and likewise his mind, is in constant metabolic relation with the rest of the universe. As a result, when we want to trace any causal mental sequence, in order to be conscious of it, we find it inextricably commingled with events in the outer world. At an early stage we find we must seek freedom in the outer as well as the inner world. We must be conscious, not only of our own laws, but of those of outer reality. 'Man has always realised that whatever free will may mean it is not will alone, but action also which is involved in liberty. For example, I am immersed in a plaster cast so that I cannot blink an eyelid. None the less, my will is completely free. Am I therefore completely free? Only extremely idealistic philosophers would suggest that I am. A free will is therefore not enough to secure liberty, but our actions

also must be unconstrained. Now everyone realises that the outer environment continually constrains our freedom, and that free will is no freedom unless it can act what it wills. It follows that to be really free we must also be able to do what we freely will to do.

But this freedom, too, leads us back to determinism. For we find, and here no philosopher has ever disputed it, that the environment is completely deterministic. That is to say, whatever motion or phenomenon we see, there is always a cause for it, which is itself caused, and so on. And the same causes, in the same circumstances, always secure the same effects. Now an understanding of this iron determinism brings freedom. For the more we understand the causality of the universe, the more we are able to do what we freely will. Our knowledge of the causality of water enables us to build ships and cross the seas ; our knowledge of the laws of air enables us to fly ; our knowledge of the inevitable behaviour of materials enables us to build houses and bridges ; our knowledge of the necessary movements of the planets enables us to construct calendars so that we sow, embark on voyages, and set out to meet each other at the times most conducive to achieving what we will to do. Thus, in the outer world too, determinism is seen to produce freedom, freedom is understood to be a special form of necessity, the *consciousness* of necessity. We see that we attain freedom by our consciousness of the causality of subjective mental phenomena together with our consciousness of the causality of external phenomena. And we are not

surprised that the characteristic of the behaviour of objects—causality—is also a characteristic of consciousness, for consciousness itself is only an aspect of an object—the body. The more we gain of this double understanding, the more free we become, possessing both free will and free action. These are not two mutually exclusive things, free will versus determinism—but on the contrary they play into each other's hands.

From this it follows that the animals are less free than men. Creatures of impulse, acting they know not why, subject to all the chances of nature, of other animals, of geographical accidents and climatic change, they are at the mercy of necessity, precisely because they are unconscious of it.

That is not to say they have no freedom, for they possess a degree of freedom. They have some knowledge of the causality of their environment, as is shown by their manipulations of time and space and material—the bird's flight, the hare's leap, the ant's nest. They have some inner self-determination, as is shown by their behaviour. But compared to man, they are unfree.

Implicit in the conception of thinkers like Russell and Forster, that all social relations are restraints on spontaneous liberty, is the assumption that the animal is the only completely free creature. No one constrains the solitary carnivore to do anything. This is of course an ancient fallacy. Rousseau is the famous exponent. Man is born free but is everywhere in chains. Always in the bourgeois mind is this legend of a golden age, of a perfectly good man corrupted by institutions. Un-



fortunately not only is man not good without institutions, he is not evil either. He is no man at all ; he is neither good nor evil ; he is an unconscious brute.

Russell's idea of liberty is the unphilosophical idea of bestiality. Narkover School is not such a bad illustration of Russell's liberty after all. The man alone, unconstrained, answerable only to his instincts, is Russell's free man. Thus all man's painful progress from the beasts is held to be useless. All men's work and sweat and revolutions have been away from freedom. If this is true, and if a man believes, as most of us do, as Russell does, that freedom is the essential goal of human effort, then civilisation should be abandoned and we should return to the woods. I am a Communist because I believe in freedom. I criticise Russell, and Wells, and E. M. Forster, because I believe they are the champions of unfreedom.

But this is going too far, it will be said. How can these men, who have defended freedom of thought, action, and morality, be champions of unfreedom ? Let us proceed with our analysis and we shall see why.

Society is a creation by which man attains a fuller measure of freedom than the beasts. It is society and society alone, that differentiates man qualitatively from the beasts. The essential feature of society is economic production. Man, the individual, cannot do what he wants alone. He is unfree alone. Therefore he attains freedom by co-operation with his fellows. Science, by which he becomes conscious of outer reality, is social. Art, by which he becomes conscious of his feelings, is

social. Economic production, by which he makes outer reality conform to his feeling, is social, and generates in its interstices science and art. It is economic production then that gives man freedom. It is because of economic production that man is free, and beasts are not. This is clear from the fact that economic production is the manipulation, by means of agriculture, horse-taming, road-building, car-construction, light, heating, and other engineering, of the environment, conformably to man's will. It enables man to do what he wills ; and he can only do what he wills with the help of others. Without roads, food supplies, machines, houses, and clothes, he would be like the man in a plaster cast, who can will what he likes, and yet is not a free man but a captive. But even his free will depends on it. For consciousness develops by the evolution of language, science, and art, and these are all born of economic production. Thus the freedom of man's actions depends on his material level, on his economic production. The more advanced the economic production, the freer the civilisation.

But, it will be argued, economic production is just what entails all the 'constraints' of society. Daily work, division of labour under superintendents, all the laws of contract and capital, all the regulations of society, arise out of this work of economic production. Precisely, for, as we saw, freedom is the consciousness of causality. And by economic production, which makes it possible for man to achieve in action his will, man becomes conscious of the means *necessary* to achieve it. That a

lever *must* be of a certain length to move the stone man *wills* to move is one consequence ; the other is that a certain number of men *must* co-operate in a certain way to wield the lever. From this it is only a matter of development to the complicated machinery of modern life, with all its elaborate social relations.

Thus all the 'constraints', 'obligations', 'inhibitions', and 'duties' of society are the very means by which freedom is obtained by men. Liberty is thus the social consciousness of necessity. Liberty is not just necessity, for all reality is united by necessity. Liberty is the consciousness of necessity—in outer reality, in myself, and in the social relations which mediate between outer reality and human selves. The beast is a victim of mere necessity, man is in society conscious and self-determined. Not of course absolutely so, but more so than the beast.

Thus freedom of action, freedom to do what we will, the vital part of liberty, is seen to be secured by the social consciousness of necessity, and to be generated in the process of economic production. The price of liberty is not eternal vigilance, but eternal work.

But what is the relation of society to the other part of liberty, freedom to will? Economic production makes man free to do what he wills, but is he free to will what he will?

We saw that he was only free to do what he willed by attaining the consciousness of outer necessity. It is equally true that he is only free to will what he will by attaining the consciousness of inner necessity. More-

over, these two are not antagonistic, but, as we shall now find, they are one. Consciousness is the result of a specific and highly important form of economic production.

Suppose someone had performed the regrettable experiment of turning Bertrand Russell, at the age of nine months, over to a goat foster-mother, and leaving him to her care, in some remote spot, unvisited by human beings, to grow to manhood. When, say forty years later, men first visited Bertrand Russell, would they find him with the manuscripts of the *Analysis of Mind* and the *Analysis of Matter* in his hands? Would they even find him in possession of his definition of number, as the class of all classes? No. In contradiction to his present state, his behaviour would be both illogical and impolite.

It looks, therefore, as if Russell, as we know and value him, is primarily a social product. Russell is a philosopher and not an animal because he was taught not only manners, but language, and so given access to the social wisdom of ages of effort. Language filled his head with ideas, showed him what to observe, taught him logic, put all other men's wisdom at his disposal, and awoke in him affectively the elementary decencies of society—morality, justice, and liberty. Russell's consciousness, like that of all useful social objects, was a creation. It is Russell's consciousness that is distinctively him, that is what we value in him, as compared to an anthropoid ape. Society made him, just as it makes a hat.

It goes without saying that Russell's 'natural gifts' (or, as we say more strictly, his genotype) were of importance to the outcome. But that is only to say that the material conditions the finished product. Society is well aware that it cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear or, except in special circumstances, a don out of a cretin. But it is also aware that out of iron ore you can make rocks, bridges, ships, or micrometers, and, out of that plastic material, man's genotype, you can make Aztecs, ancient Egyptians, Athenians, Prussians, proletarians, parsons, or public schoolboys.

It also goes almost without saying that a man is not a hat. He is a unique social product, the original of Butler's fantasy of machines that gave birth to machines. He himself is one of those machines. The essential truth about man, as compared with hats, is that he is not a hat, but the man who wears it. And the essential truth about this fashioning process of man by society, is that the fashioning is primarily of his consciousness, a process that does not take place with anything else. Now it is precisely because society elaborates his consciousness, that man, although a social product like a hat, is capable of free will, whereas a hat, being unconscious, is not capable of free will. The coming-to-be of a man, his 'growing up', is society fashioning *itself*, a group of consciousnesses, themselves made by previous consciousnesses, making another. So the torch of liberty is handed on, and burns still brighter. But it is in living that man's consciousness takes its distinctive stamp, and living is simply entering into social relations.

But, it will be urged, man—the individual—sees the world for himself alone—mountains, sky, and sea. Alone in his study he reflects on fate and death. True. But mountains and sea have a meaning to him, precisely because he is articulate-speaking, because he has a socially-moulded consciousness. Death, fate, and sea are highly-evolved social concepts. Each individual contributes a little to altering and elaborating them, but how small a contribution compared to the immense pressure of the past ! Language, science, and art are all simply the results of man's uniting with his fellows socially to learn about himself and outer reality, in order to impose his desires upon it. Both knowledge and effort are only possible in co-operation, and both are made necessary by man's struggles to be freer.

Thus man's inner freedom, the conscious will, acting towards conscious ends, is a product of society ; it is an economic product. It is the most refined of the products society achieves in its search for freedom. Social consciousness flowers out of social effort. We give vent in effort to our instinctive desires. Learning how to accomplish them, we learn something about the nature of reality and how to master it. This wisdom modifies the nature of our desires, which become more conscious, more full of accurate images of reality. So enriched, the desires become subtler, and, in working to achieve profounder goals, in more elaborate economic production, gain still deeper insight into reality, and, as consequence, themselves become yet more enriched. Thus, in dialectic process, social being generates social mind,

and this interplay between deepening inner and outer reality is conserved and passed on by culture. Man, as society advances, has a consciousness composed less and less of unmodified instinct, more and more of socially-fashioned knowledge and emotion. Man understands more and more clearly the necessities of his own being and of outer reality. He becomes increasingly more free.

The illusion that our minds are free to the extent that, like the beasts, we are unconscious of the causality of our mental states, is just what secures our unfreedom. Bourgeois society to-day clearly exhibits in practice this truth, which we have established by analysis in theory. The bourgeois believes that liberty consists in absence of social organisation ; that liberty is a negative quality, a deprivation of existing obstacles to it ; and not a positive quality, the reward of endeavour and wisdom. This belief is itself the outcome of bourgeois social relations. As a result of it, the bourgeois intellectual is unconscious of the causality that makes his consciousness what it is. Like the neurotic who refuses to believe that his compulsion is the result of a certain unconscious complex, the bourgeois refuses to believe that his conception of liberty as a mere deprivation of social restraints arises from bourgeois social relations themselves, and that it is just this illusion which is constraining him on every side. He refuses to see that his own limited liberty ; the captivity of the worker, and all the contradictions of developing bourgeois relations—pacifism, fascism, war, hate, cruelty, disease—are bound in one net of causality, that each is influenced by

each, and that therefore it is fallacious to suppose a simple effort of the will of the free man, without knowledge of the causes, will banish fascism, war, and slumps. Because of his basic fallacy, this type of intellectual always tries to cure positive social evils, such as wars, by negative individual actions, such as non-co-operation, passive resistance or conscientious objection. This is because he cannot rid himself of the assumption that the individual is free. But we have shown that the individual is never free. He can only attain freedom by social co-operation. He can only do what he wants by using social forces. If, therefore, he wishes to stop poverty, war, and misery, he must do it, not by passive resistance, but by using social relations. But in order to use social relations he must understand them. He must become conscious of the laws of society, just as, if he wants to lever up a stone, he must know the laws of levers.

Once the bourgeois intellectual can see that society is the only instrument of freedom, he has advanced a step farther along the road to freedom. But until then he is unfree. True he is a logician, he understands the causality of nature, Einstein's theories, all the splendid apparatus of social discovery, but he still believes in a magic world of social relations divorced from these theories, in which only the god of bourgeois liberty rules. This is proved, not only in his theory, in the way his doctrine of liberty is accepted like a theological dogma, and never made to square with all his philosophic and scientific knowledge ; but it is also proved in action, when the bourgeois intellectual is powerless



to stop the development of increasing unfreedom in bourgeois society. All the compulsions of militancy, fascism, and economic distress harry contemporary society, and all he can oppose to them is individualistic action, conscientious objection and passive resistance. This is bound to be the case if he is unfree. Like a man who believes he can walk upon the water and drowns in it, the bourgeois intellectual asserts a measure of freedom that does not in fact exist, and is therefore unfree mentally and physically. Who cannot see iron compulsion stalking through the bourgeois world to-day? We are free when we can do what we will. Society is an instrument of freedom in so far as it secures what men want. The members of bourgeois society, all of them, worker, capitalist, and capitalist-intellectual, want an increase in material wealth, happiness, freedom from strife, from danger of death, security. But bourgeois society to-day produces a decrease in material wealth and also creates unemployment, unhappiness, strife, insecurity, constant war. Therefore all who live in bourgeois society—democratic, Fascist or Rooseveltian—are unfree, for bourgeois society is not giving them what they desire. The fact that they have, or have not, votes or ‘freedom of speech’ does not alter, in any way, their unfreedom.

Why does not bourgeois society fulfil the wants of its members? Because it does not understand the laws of economic production—it is unorganised and unplanned. It is unconscious of the necessities of economic production, and, because of that, cannot make economic

production fulfil its desires. Why is it unconscious of the necessities of economic production? Because, for historical reasons, it believes that economic production is best when each man is left free to produce for himself what seems to him most profitable to produce. In other words, it believes that freedom is secured by the lack of social organisation of the individual in the function of society, economic production. As we saw, this individual freedom through unconsciousness is a delusion. Unconscious, deluded bourgeois society is therefore unfree. Even Russell is unfree; and in the next war, as in the last, will be put in gaol.

This very unfreedom—expressed as individualism—in the basic function of society, ultimately generates every form of external constraint. The bourgeois revolutionary asserted a fallacious liberty—that man was born good and was everywhere in chains, that institutions made him bad. It turned out that this liberty he claimed was individualism in private production. This revealed its fallacious nature as a freedom by appearing at once as a restraint. For it could only be secured, it was only a name, for unrestricted right to own the means of production, which is in itself a restriction on those who are thus alienated from their livelihood. Obviously, what I own absolutely my neighbour is restricted from touching.

All social relations based on duty and privilege were changed by the bourgeois revolution into exclusive and forcible rights to ownership of cash. I produce for my individual self, for profit. Necessarily, therefore, I pro-

duce for the market, not for use. I work for cash, not from duty to my lord or retainer. My duties to the State could all now be compounded for cash. All my obligations of contract, whether of marriage or social organisation, could be compounded for cash. Cash appeared as the only obligation between men and men, who were otherwise apparently completely free—free master, free labourer, free producer, free consumer, free markets, free trade, free entrepreneur, the free flow of capital from hand to hand and land to land. And even man's obligations to cash appeared an obligation of cash to him, to be absolutely owned by him.

This dissolution of social obligations could be justified if man was free in himself, and if, doing what seemed best for him, for his own good and profit, he would in fact get what he desired, and so secure freedom. It was a return to the apparent liberty of the jungle, where each beast struggles only for himself, and owes no obligations to anyone. But this liberty, as we saw, is an illusion. The beast is less free than man. The desires of the jungle cancel each other out, and no one gets exactly what he wants. No beast is free.

This fallacy at once revealed itself as a fallacy in the following way. Complete freedom to own property meant that society found itself divided into haves and have-nots, like the beasts in the jungle. The have-nots, each trying to do what was best for him in the given circumstances, according to the bourgeois doctrine of liberty, would have forcibly seized the property from the haves. But this would have been complete anarchy,

and though anarchy, according to bourgeois theory, is complete liberty, in practice the bourgeois speedily sees that to live in the jungle is not to be free. Property is the basis of his mode of living. In such circumstances social production could not be carried on, and society would dissolve, man return to savagery, and freedom altogether perish. Thus the bourgeois contradicted his theory in practice from the start. The State took its distinctive modern form as the enforcement of bourgeois rights by coercion. Police, standing army and laws were all brought into being to protect the haves from the 'free' desires of the have-nots. Bourgeois liberty at once gives rise to bourgeois coercion, to prisons, armies, contracts, to all the sticky and restraining apparatus of the law, to all the ideology and education centred round the sanctity of private property, to all the bourgeois commandments. Thus bourgeois liberty was built on a lie, bound to reveal in time its contradictions.

Among the have-nots, bourgeois freedom gave rise to fresh coercions. The free labourer, owning nothing, was free to sell his labour in any market. But this became a form of slavery worse, in its unrestricted form, than chattel slavery, a horror that Government Blue Books describing pre-Factory Act conditions make vivid for all their arid phraseology. They show how unrestricted factory industrialisation made beasts of men, women, and children, how they died of old age in their thirties, how they rose early in the morning exhausted to work and knocked off late at night only

to sink exhausted to sleep, how the children were aged by work before they had ceased to be infants. Made worse than a slave—for he was still free to be unemployed—the labourer fought for freedom by enforcing social restraints on his employers. Banding with others in trade unions, he began the long fight that gave rise to the various Factory Acts, wage agreements, and all the elaborate social legislation which to-day coerces the bourgeois employer.

And, after all this, even the bourgeois himself is not free. The unrestricted following of his illusion of liberty enslaves him. His creed demands unrestricted competition, and this, because it is unrestricted, works as wildly and blindly as the weather. It makes him as unfree, as much at the mercy of a not understood chance, as a cork bobbing on the waves. So he too seeks freedom in restraint—industry is increasingly sheltered by amalgamations, rings, tariffs, price agreements, 'unfair competition' clauses, subsidies, and Government protection for the exploitation of Colonial areas. Bourgeois liberty makes overt its self-contradictions by becoming monopoly.

Here is the secret paradox of bourgeois development and decline. The bourgeois abandoned feudal relations in the name of a liberty which he visualised as freedom from social restraints. Such a liberty would have led to savagery. But in fact the liberty he claimed—'unrestricted' private property—really involved restraint, that is, it gave rise to complex forms of social organisation, which were more manysided, more incessant, and

more all-pervading, than feudal restraints. Thus the cash relation, which he conceived as putting an end to all social restraints, and thus giving him liberty, did give him a larger measure of liberty than in feudalism, but in the opposite way to his expectations, by imposing far more complex organisations than those of feudal civilisation. All the elaborate forms of bourgeois contracts, market organisation, industrial structure, national States, trade unions, tariffs, Imperialism, and bureaucratic democratic government, the iron pressure of the consumer and the labour market, the dole, subsidy, bounties—all these multifarious forms of social organisation—were brought into being by a class that demanded the dissolution of social organisation. And the fact that bourgeois civilisation obtained a greater measure of control over its environment than feudal—and was that much freer—is precisely because all these complex social organisations were brought into being—but brought blindly.

Blindly brought into being ; that is the source of the ultimate unfreedom of bourgeois civilisation. Because it is not conscious of the fact that private ownership of the means of production, unrestricted competition, and the cash nexus of their natures, involve various forms of restraint—alienation from property, captivity to slump and war, unemployment and misery—bourgeois society is unable to control itself. The various forms of social organisation it has blindly erected, as an animal tunnelling for gold might throw up great mounds of earth, are all haphazard and not understood.

It believes that to become conscious of them fully, to manipulate them consciously for the ends of the will, is to be an advocate of determinism, to kill liberty, to bring into birth the bee-hive state. For still, in spite of all the havoc the bourgeois sees around him, he believes that only the beast is free, and that to be subject to all the winds of chance, at the mercy of wars and slumps and social strife, is to be free.

Any definition of liberty is humbug that does not mean this : liberty to do what one wants. A people is free whose members have liberty to do what they want—to get the goods they desire and avoid the ills they hate. What do men want? They want to be happy, and not to be starved or despised or deprived of the decencies of life. They want to be secure, and friendly with their fellows, and not conscripted to slaughter and be slaughtered. They want to marry, and beget children, and help, not oppress each other. Who is free who cannot do these things, even if he has a vote, and free speech? Who then is free in bourgeois society, for not a few men but millions are forced by circumstances to be unemployed, and miserable, and despised, and unable to enjoy the decencies of life? Millions are forced to go out and be slaughtered, or to kill, and to oppress each other. Millions are forced to strive with their fellows for a few glittering prizes, and to be deprived of marriage, and a home, and children, because society cannot afford them these things. Millions and millions of men are not free. These are the elements of liberty, and it is insane—until these

are achieved—for a limited class to believe it can secure the subtleties of liberty. Only when these necessities are achieved, can man rise higher and, by the practice of art and science, learn more clearly what he wants, and what he can get; having only then passed from the sphere of necessity to that of freedom.

Each step to higher consciousness is made actively with struggle and difficulty. It is man's natural but fatal error to suppose that the path of liberty is easy, that is a mere negative, a relaxation, the elimination of an obstacle in his path. But it is more than that. True freedom must be created as strenuously as we make the instruments of freedom, tools and machines. It must be wrested out of the heart of reality, including the inner reality of man's mind.

That is why all lovers of liberty, who have understood the nature of freedom, and escaped from the ignorant categories of bourgeois thought, turn to Communism. For that is simply what Communism is, the attainment of more liberty than bourgeois society can reach. Communism has as its basis the understanding of the causality of society, so that all the unfreedom involved in bourgeois society, the enslavement of the have-nots by the haves, and the slavery of both haves and have-nots to wars, slumps, depression and superstition, may be ended. To be conscious of the laws of dead matter: that is something; but it is not enough. Communism seizes hold of a higher degree of self-determination, to rescue man from war, starvation, hate, and coercion, by becoming conscious



of the causality of society. It is Communism that makes free will real to man, by making society conscious of itself. To change reality we must understand its laws. If we *wish* to move a stone, we *must* apply the leverage in the proper place. If we *wish* to change bourgeois social relations into communist, we *must* follow a certain path. The have-nots, the proletariat, must take over the means of production from the haves, the bourgeoisie, and since, as we saw, these two freedoms are incompatible, restraint, in the form of the coercive state, must remain in being as long as the bourgeoisie try to get back their former property. But, unlike the former situation, this stage is only temporary. This stage is what is known as the dictatorship of the proletariat, the necessary step from the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie—which is what the bourgeois state is—to the classless state, which is what Communism is. And as Russia shows, even in the dictatorship of the proletariat, before the classless State has come into being, man is already freer. He can avoid unemployment, and competition with his fellows, and poverty. He can marry and beget children, and achieve the decencies of life. He is not asked to oppress his fellows.

To the worker, subject to unemployment, starved in the midst of plenty, this path eventually becomes plain. Despite the assurances of the bourgeoisie that in a democratic or national State he is completely free, he revolts. And who, in those days, will stand by his side? Will the bourgeoisie, themselves pinched and disfranchised by the growing concentration of capital, discouraged,

pessimistic, harried into war and oppression by 'forces beyond control', and yet still demanding liberty? On the answer to that question, which each individual bourgeois must make, sooner or later, will depend whether he strives in those days to make men free or to keep them in chains. And this too depends on whether he has understood the nature of liberty. The class to whom capitalism means liberty steadily contracts, but those once of that class who are now enslaved to war, and imperialism and poverty, still cling to that bourgeois interpretation of liberty that has abundantly proved its falsehood. They can only escape and become free by understanding the active nature of liberty, and by becoming conscious of the path they must follow to attain it. Their will is not free as long as they will liberty but produce unfreedom. It is only free when they will communism and produce liberty.

This good, liberty, contains all good. Not only at the simple level of current material wants, but where all men's aspirations bud, freedom is the same goal, pursued in the same way. Science is the means by which man learns what he can do, and therefore it explores the necessity of outer reality. Art is the means by which man learns what he wants to do, and therefore it explores the essence of the human heart. And bourgeoisdom, shutting its eyes to beauty, turning its back on science, only follows its stupidity to the end. It crucifies liberty upon a cross of gold, and if you ask in whose name it does this, it replies, 'In the name of personal freedom.'

## FURTHER STUDIES IN A DYING CULTURE

*by the same author*

ILLUSION AND REALITY  
STUDIES IN A DYING CULTURE  
THE CRISIS IN PHYSICS  
COLLECTED POEMS

FURTHER  
STUDIES IN A  
DYING CULTURE

CHRISTOPHER CAUDWELL

*edited and with a preface by*

EDGELL RICKWORD

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## PREFACE

FOR those who pick up a book by Christopher Caudwell for the first time it is necessary to say that in 1937, when a young man of 29, he met his death in action against General Franco's Moorish troops. It is necessary to state this, because one of the leading themes of these essays is the unity of thinking and doing, the nullity of either in isolation. Caudwell did not stand 'dreaming on the verge of strife,' nor did he plunge into struggle without thought. He was consciously a different species of activity. 'Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways. The point however is to change it.' And for this young Englishman in 1936, as for so many generous hearted men and women all over the globe, the focal point of world change was the war between the Spanish Government and the internationally aided rebels. The philosopher, the lover of knowledge, could not but turn soldier in a struggle in which the forces of enlightenment and of obscurantism were so starkly opposed.

A decade of intensive experience lay behind Caudwell when he made his fateful decision. Those were years in which the existence of crisis was brought home to all but the most butterfly-minded. On all sides theories were propounded to account for the fact that hungry men and empty factories existed alongside men whose unsatisfied elemental needs those factories and workless men could have supplied. Economics was promoted the queen of sciences, but so many rival factions contended for the throne that the man in the

street cursed them all equally heartily, for their words brought neither parsnips nor butter.

Caudwell had certainly an insatiable intellectual curiosity, a consuming Faustian ambition to master all the sciences. But whatever one studied in those days, the course of events always dragged back the attention to the realisation of economics, the material reproduction of our means of existence, as the basis of social organisation. It is a measure of the fantastic existence to which our minds were, and perhaps are, fashioned that such a self-evident proposition should rouse deep resentment and stimulate a counter-polemic of mystification, of juggling with sonorous abstractions.

When the garish boom of the late 20's suddenly collapsed into slump, with its lengthening queues of unemployed, the respective merits of those who claimed oracular status became of more than academic interest: and for the first time in this country on a considerable scale, the students and the white-collar workers found themselves as helpless as the worker in industry. The paradox of modern society, the impoverishment brought about by the most stupendous technological achievement, thrust itself, however unwelcome there, even into the millionaire's Press. Whilst as a temporary measure of alleviation food and industrial crops were destroyed (to keep up prices) it was seriously suggested that the only permanent cure for the disease of over-production was a technological holiday; not only should no new labour-saving devices be introduced, but existing machine processes should be turned back to manual labour in order to absorb the unemployed. These and other whimsies of like character were propounded by the economic pundits, and have been recorded for our delectation in the witty and poetic fantasias of Eimar O'Duffy.

I recall this nightmare period for the information of those

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too young to remember it themselves, who perhaps started life when rearmament orders had set the wheels turning again, and because this experience of the break-down of a culture started Caudwell out on his quest for the means of regenerating society.

In the frustrated and bewildered condition that then afflicted us, the revival of interest in Marxism, with its massive clarification of the issues, could not be long delayed. In England, alone among European countries, Marx had been relegated to the status of an eccentric, and his existence was not acknowledged at universities. Since his brief influence in the eighties his work had been kept alive by small groups of working men (mainly in South Wales and the Clyde) who clubbed together to buy his weighty tomes from Kerr of Chicago. Now, he was in the very air. A mighty State acknowledged his teachings as the basis of the radical reconstruction of her economy and culture. Marxism was a light that radiated hope through the gloom of Britain's depressed areas as well as to the impoverished peasants of the colonies. To stamp out every vestige of understanding of what Marx had taught became the prime maxim and declared intention of another powerful State.

And having grasped from Marx the clue to the contemporary labyrinth, Caudwell found that the other knowledge he had acquired now fell into due place and proportion. What had before been an accumulation, 'a monstrously detailed collection of facts,' now became capable of organisation, of vitality. The special progress within each sphere of knowledge, the 'closed worlds' of Caudwell's phrase, which is certainly possible even within a culture decaying as a whole, could now be related to a general movement of society. The very pains rending our communities were revealed to be not death agonies but birth pangs.

Caudwell was not of the type to be content with a few

simple generalisations. Having the clue, he set out to explore with its aid deeply into contemporary reality, as that reality was being continually extended. And it was clear to him that he could not do this as the contemplative philosopher in secluded study. He became a member of the Communist party and played a full part in its organisational and educational routine. Naturally so, since the working class had the decisive part to play in liberating society from its intolerable contradictions, but could not bring this about by spontaneous revolt against its immediate deprivations.

The pressure of continual crisis, to which we have been subjected for a generation, induces a tendency to evasion, which is very noticeable in the behaviour pattern of to-day, particularly among the intellectuals. The perspective is more than the individual can bear to contemplate alone, and whereas faith is gregarious, the exercise of reason seems solitary. That is not how it was with Caudwell, who through reason came to achieve solidarity. I feel that his writings will be read to-day with even more understanding than when they were written, for the dozen years that have passed have immensely emphasised the world-pattern which he discerned, so that it is more easily visible than before. In no case, I think, has his position been falsified by events, for the technological advances necessitated by the late war have already exacerbated the conflicts and contradictions within the capitalist system, and this morbid condition finds its reflection in the violence and sensationalism which provide an increasing proportion of the subject-matter represented in literature and the film.

This book contains what were, it seems from internal evidence, Caudwell's latest writings and they show the developing originality and maturity of his mind. As a precaution lest some details of which he wrote in the essay 'Consciousness' should have been outmoded by subsequent

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research, I sent the manuscript to one of our younger neurologists: who replied that so far from this being the case, 'Caudwell brilliantly anticipates a whole trend which is now discernable in modern neuro-anatomy. The experimental material was not available when he was writing so that the value of his application of the Marxist method to the facts as then known is dramatically revealed by the results of subsequent investigation.'

Another comment on these essays was: 'Caudwell has the power of making his conceptual world very densely peopled, and what distinguishes him, in my opinion, is his extreme awareness of the different fields of consciousness and his ability to link them up.' The exposition of any theory tends to be thin, exclusive of all else, but Caudwell's writing is like an exciting discussion for he is always conscious of an invisible interlocutor, keen witted opponent of his own thesis. He had not merely grasped Marxism intellectually or emotionally; it had entered into the fabric of his life so that he thought in it, as one can think in a new language, not merely translate it into one's own. But the warmth of emotion, too, glows through the argument so that it becomes at times true eloquence. The essay on *Æsthetics*, the most abstruse of abstract subjects, reminds us that Caudwell had the creative as well as the ratiocinative gift, and that poetry and art were as essential to his sense of fitness as bread and air. And in the paragraph which forms the peroration to this book he has written his own apologia and sufficient epitaph.

*Edgell Rickword*

## NOTE

The quotation from Marx which follows was placed by Caudwell at the head of one of his essays, but it is so essentially a statement of his starting point that it comes naturally as a prelude to the whole book.

Thanks are due to Dr. B. H. Kerman for his notes on the technical aspects of certain statements in the essay 'Consciousness.'

*From Karl Marx:*

INTRODUCTION TO THE CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

'In the social production of their means of life, human beings enter into definite and necessary relations which are independent of their will: production relations which correspond to a definite stage in the development of their productive forces. The totality of these production relations constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis upon which a legal and political superstructure arises, and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond.

'The mode of production of the material means of life determines, in general, the social, political, and intellectual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of human beings which determines their existence, it is their social existence which determines their consciousness.

'At a certain stage of their development the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing production relationships. Or, what is a legal expression for the same thing, with the property relationships within which they have hitherto moved. From forms of development of the productive forces those relationships turn into fetters upon them. A period of social revolution then begins.

'With the change in the economic foundation the whole gigantic superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations we must always distinguish between the material changes in the economic conditions of production (changes which can be determined with the precision of natural science) and the legal, political, religious, æsthetic, or philosophic—in short ideological—

forms in which human beings become conscious of this conflict and fight it out to an issue.

‘Just as little as we can judge an individual by what he thinks of himself, just so little can we appraise such a revolutionary epoch in accordance with its own consciousness of itself. On the contrary, we have to explain the consciousness as the outcome of the contradictions of material life, of the conflict existing between social productive forces and production relationships.

‘No social order is destroyed until all the productive forces for which it gives scope have been developed: new and higher production relations cannot appear until the material conditions for their existence have ripened within the womb of the old social order. Therefore mankind in general never sets itself problems it cannot solve: since, looked at more closely, we always find that the problem arises only when the material conditions for its solution exist, or at least, are already in process of formation.

‘We can in broad outline designate the Asiatic, the Classical, the Feudal, and the modern Bourgeois forms of production as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society.

‘The bourgeois production relations are the final antagonistic form in the development of social production—antagonistic, not in the sense of an antagonism between individuals, but one inherent in the life conditions and social circumstances of the individuals, at the time when the productive forces developing in the womb of bourgeois society are creating the material conditions for the solution of that antagonism.

‘This social formation, therefore, constitutes the closing chapter of the prehistoric stage of human society.’



## THE BREATH OF DISCONTENT

*A Study in Bourgeois Religion*

IN the study of comparative religion, bourgeois scholarship has from time to time attempted to draw a distinction between magic and religion. The original distinction was theological; it took a subtler form when magic came to be regarded as the primitive parent of science, of the belief in the universal reign of causality. But lacking a definition of either magic or religion that was really analytical, bourgeois culture has never been able to produce a science of comparative religion which would be both explanatory and inclusive; it has always at some stage or other in the study revealed its own unscientific content.

Various psychological explanations of the evolution of religion have been put forward, of which Freud's *Totem and Tabu* is representative, in which well-known psycho-analytical mechanisms are called upon to explain the development of religion. But if man's psyche is genetically unchanging, the story of religion cannot be explained in terms of the individual psyche, for a most important characteristic of religion is just its wide variation, a variation out of all proportion to the trifling genetic variation of men in historic times. The study of religion, in any scientific sense, must therefore be the study of those causes, *independent of any individual psyche*, which produce in the individual psyche the religious beliefs and attitudes that we know from history.

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Attempts have been made to explain the development of different religious beliefs from animism to Christianity, as the result of an evolutionary process in the course of which religion passes through a series of stages. Such a notion is only evolutionary in the abstract, for it deals with the evolution, not of objective religion but of the idea of religion. Religion exists as a sum of human beliefs and actions, of beliefs held by real individuals acting in a real society. Its evolution can therefore only be considered as part of the evolution of real men in real society. This so-called evolutionary school first abstracts religious beliefs from the men who hold and act them, and then studies their possible development. This is a logical, not a real, evolution. Since the material threads making the visual pattern—man's real active existence producing religious beliefs—have been cut, the submerged interconnection which would explain the pattern is no longer accessible.

Of all the bourgeois schools the most realistic in its approach is the 'functional' school of whose theory Malinowski and his pupil Audrey Richards are leading exponents. This school deals with the religious beliefs of primitives only as they evidence themselves in primitive life, not merely as abstract 'beliefs' but in action, as part of the warp and woof of daily social transactions.

But it is part of the doom of bourgeois culture that it can only achieve such correct approaches in closed worlds in a limited sector. Although the functional method is formally correct, it gets applied only to a limited sphere—the study of certain primitive peoples—and the observers continually show the basic confusion of their views on the relations of men, nature and society. To be a thorough-going functionalist as regards Melanesian or Bantu society, would be to be a Marxist and a dialectical materialist.

The view of human society taken by this school is not

really functional, for it does not include, as functions of society, the 'civilised' equipment the observers themselves bring to their survey of primitive society. Thus even their primitive society is never more than a collection of individuals, for there is no real attempt to discern in the collection of individuals those relations which make it a society and are the seat of change and development. Society for them is static and non-historic, as if it were the result of a crystallation and not of an evolutionary movement.

Bourgeois culture has, however, not been content with three different ways of explaining the evolution of religion. There is also the environmental explanation, in which religious beliefs are the projection of natural phenomena (sun and rain and sky myths); the individualistic explanation, in which cunning priests, kings, and chiefs seize hold of man's 'natural' belief in magic to impose their rule and a settled cosmogony on their fellows; and the idealistic explanation, in which religion is due to the birth or evolution of the Ideas of Spirit, Goodness, Awe, and so on.

Marx, however, developing in his revolutionary activity Feuerbach's and Morgan's pioneer work, had shown nearly 100 years ago the correct path to follow—not as a new 'fad' derived from a limited sphere (the psycho-analytical, evolutionary, or functional approaches) but as part of a consistent world-view, the arrival at which meant that one had ceased to be bourgeois.

(i) 'Religion is a *fantastic reality*.'\*

*Fantastic*, because the statements it makes about existents are incorrect, because the ideas of outer reality incorporated in it do not correspond with outer reality. *Real*, because

\* The sentences on which Caudwell comments in the next few pages are quoted from a famous passage in Marx's *Introduction to a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*, given in full at the end of this essay. page 75 (Ed.)

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these ideas are causally linked with material reality, and are not only determined but also determine, in their turn exerting a causal influence on their matrix. Thus by acknowledging that religious ideas are not spontaneous but form part of active reality, Marxism is able to analyse more deeply the real causes which produced them. The analysis of religion becomes also an analysis of society.

(i) 'Religion is consciousness of self and the self-feeling of a man who has not yet found himself or has lost himself again.'

The animals are not religious, and religion thus becomes a badge of man, not as mere animal but as distinct from animals, and man distinct from animals is man in association as a functioning group, a group engaged in economic production. Religion is seen to be, like the consciousness of which it is a part, an economic product. Because it is conscious it is 'higher' than the blind unconscious knowledge of reality shown by the animal in its actions, the animal whose 'notions' of causality exist implicitly as mere conditioned or unconditioned reflexes. Yet religion is a *distorted* knowledge of reality. It is a consciousness of self which is lawless and unattached—which has not yet found itself or has lost itself. Such a man is conscious of himself, but projects this consciousness outside himself, unaware as yet of his own necessities or of the universe of causality in which his existence is grounded.

(ii) 'Man is not an abstract being existing outside the world. Man—that is the world of men, the State, society.'

This consciousness is not the consciousness of an abstract average man. It is the self-feeling of a man in the world of men, living in active social relations with other men, and forming a distinctive society. It is the self-feeling of a particular individual in a particular society at a particular

time, and hence the study of religion is inseparable from the study of society.

(iv) 'This state, this society, produces religion—an inverted consciousness of the world—because the world is itself an inverted world.'

The religious distortion of consciousness is produced by the structure of the society in which it is generated. It is the outcome of an illusion, a flaw, an infection, in that society. Thus the criticism of religion is also the criticism of the society that produced it, and this does not mean a criticism of that society in the abstract but of its concrete reality, a criticism of all the social relations engendered by its level of economic production.

(v) 'The struggle against religion is therefore, indirectly, the struggle against that world whose spiritual aroma is religion.'

Since the criticism of religion becomes, to Marxism, the criticism of the concrete social relations which produced it, the struggle against its errors and its distortions can never be a struggle against religion as such—a kind of armchair atheism—because such a struggle is not a real one—it is ideal truth fighting ideal religion and both, when abstracted from action, are unreal. The very criticism of religion, as soon as it becomes criticism of concrete religion, becomes criticism of the social relations that engendered it, and when this criticism emerges creatively as a struggle, it will not be an ideal struggle against religious ideas but a concrete struggle against real social relations. There is no absolute truth to set against fantastic lies, but fantastic reality whose fantastic content is exposed in real living.

(vi) 'Religious misery is at once the expression of real *misery* and a protest against that *real* misery. Religion is the sigh of the hard-pressed creature; the heart of a heartless world. . . . It is the opium of the people.'

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But what we have previously said does not mean that the struggle against religion is merely the struggle against the non-religious social relations that produced it, and that religion is exempted from the field of battle. The struggle is against the real, concrete, social relations which produce these beliefs, and some of these relations are religious relations. The whole of concrete society is the domain of Marxism, and religion is included in concrete society now. The religious beliefs, and those social forms that are religious, are part of the existing superstructure of society. Active criticism of that society involves the transformation of its social relations, and therefore encounters the resistance of all those men for whom the superstructure is the expression of their special status and privilege in society. This resistance makes use of all the forms of the existing superstructure, including the religious forms. Religious beliefs are part of the form in which 'men become conscious of the struggle and fight it out to an issue'.

Yet religion is 'at once the expression of real *misery* and a protest against that *real* misery'. It pictures an inverted world which just because it is inverted, will also be a criticism of the real world. A religion expressive of the social relations of a virile and active age may, as those relations emerge more and more clearly as the bulwark of an exploiting class now grown parasitic, finally find some of its content in antagonism to that exploiting class. Conversely the religion which embodies the protest of an exploited class may, as that class becomes revolutionary and creative, itself grow vital and insurgent. Religion, because it is the opium of the people and not the pride of the exploiting class, may at some time give rise to a revolutionary religion, the weapon of the people.

\* \* \* \* \*

Is magic then a 'human weakness' and religion a specific

social product, its form and rôle only varying according to the society in which it is found? Marx was able to answer these questions in the course of his sociological analysis:—

Magic is the product of a primitive society. (Man's self-feeling before he has found himself.) Religion is the product of a class society. (Man's self-feeling when he has lost himself.) Dialectical materialism is the product of a classless society. (Man's self-feeling when he has found himself again.)

'The primitive man may recognise the sensations he experiences without an adequate knowledge of their causes. Malinowski states that the Trobriand Islanders enjoy the act of eating without any knowledge of the physiological function of nutrition, just as they enjoy sexual pleasure without being aware of the physiological nature of paternity. This was not so with the natives among whom I worked, but I noticed that the sensations connected with the alimentary or sexual functions were reckoned on a par with what we should describe as emotional conditions—such as anger or sorrow. It must be remembered here that visceral sensations actually are produced through the action of the involuntary nervous system under the strain of strong emotions such as fear or rage. The savage recognises that eating, sexual satisfaction, pregnancy, as well as a number of emotions, may all be responsible for physiological sensations which are, in many respects, similar. What wonder that he concludes sometimes that their cause is similar? "When I drink beer I feel hot inside, as I do when I am angry," a Muhemba said to me; and a man who has just had sexual intercourse is also described as "hot." Radcliffe-Brown points out that the word *kimil* is used by the Andaman Islander to describe heat, the condition of a man after eating and also after slaying an enemy. It is well known, too, that among some primitive tribes pregnancy is supposed to be a result of eating some special food recognised by the first attack of sickness that the woman experiences. The Malayan speaks of the *hantu* or the spirit of the forest, together with the *hantu* that makes people

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gamble, smoke opium, dispute, or those that produce stomach-ache or headache, as though all these could be traced to a similar cause. In fact, as Mr. Smith sums up the situation among the Ba-ila: "The parts they assign to the organs in the economy of the body are psychical rather than physiological, i.e. they regard them more as the seats of emotion than of vital processes."\*\*

Are animals ignorant of causality? In so far as they are able to respond actively and correctly to stimuli (leaping on a moving object, turning towards a sound) they prove their knowledge of causality. They show a conditioned reflex, in which the conditioning represents a certain knowledge of causality acquired from experience. But it is unconscious knowledge.

With the evolution of primitive man self-consciousness emerges. It emerges as an affect, as a feeling which is not merely the glow of action but something which can be recalled, can become the object of perception, and can be externalised. It can be described.

But it is the self-feeling of a man who has yet not found himself. The affect awakened by the stimulus appears to lead a violent, solitary life of its own. It is common to a range of actions and is yet distinguishable from them. On the one hand it is separate, an ego, a stable power; on the other hand it interpenetrates reality, attaching itself to a variety of active, interesting movements in outer reality. And because it attaches to reality, it begins to take on itself some of the attributes and interest of outer reality. The fear becomes the thing feared; the desire, the thing desired; the feeling of domination the *actual* domination of reality. The affect is plastic and fluid as reality is not. It is movable, recallable, shareable; it is a substitute for reality. It is the self-feeling of the man who has not found himself, because

\* Audrey I. Richards. *Hunger and Work in a Savage Tribe*, 1932.



he has not yet come to regard himself as part of reality, in causal unity with it. How could he do so, when the first stage of consciousness was the separation of himself from reality—the discrimination of subject from object as a struggle, as an antagonism of self against not-self?

Consciousness emerges then as a ‘lost,’ bewildered affect, apparently full of illusion and fluidity. It is precisely this fluidity which gives it its value and ultimately its justification as the vehicle of higher truths.

The affect, which emerges in the individual as a common reaction to a variety of experiences, becomes the gesture and finally the word which, because it is external and similar, becomes for the group a social name crystallising the common adventures of the group in the world of reality. Because the affect involves or is rooted in a similar behaviour it becomes the means, *via* the word, of organising social behaviour in reference to the varying phenomena of the outside world. Each enriches the other, and language and consciousness grow as a result of their interaction with a continually elaborating universe.

It is this interaction which is social and tribal. Nutrition and shelter and protection from wild beasts involve a series of elaborate actions performed in unison and by no means instinctive—in short, economic production. Such elaborate activities can only be co-ordinated by an elaboration of affect and word organisations which thus contain within their interstices a *social* view of outer *reality* and a *community* of emotionally tinged *ideas*. Thus any picture of the individual consciousness at the start detaching itself as a simple ego from all reality, and acquiring its own presentations and organising them, is false; for consciousness emerges as the concomitant of economic production, as part and parcel of man’s interpenetration with outer reality. That interpenetration generates consciousness, which is therefore full

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of the impress of both. The formation of consciousness is an active process, now and historically; but because the activity is social and secured by a division of labour, this is not obvious to introspection.

What then is the part that magic plays in this active interpenetration? It is seen everywhere to be the activity of primitive or atavistic man who, having become conscious of himself, attempts to find himself by projecting his self-feeling into outer reality, in the form of spirits (animism), forces, demons, hantu, djinns, nymphs, genii, powers, mana, ghosts, devils. And he projects, not only the affects but the active organisation of them, so that it seems possible to control reality by those movements which have accompanied such affects in the past. Rain-making, harvest, the multiplication of food-animals and the like, is secured by imitating the noise of the rain, the actions of sowing or reaping the harvest, and the gait or appearance of the animals.

By thus projecting his self-feeling into outer reality, man also feels *his* way into it. True, he makes the environmental *human*, arbitrary, emotional. But as a result he also makes *himself* environmental. He comes from the transaction enriched with a knowledge of reality.

He makes as it were a series of magic propositions about reality, a chain of wish-fulfilments. In acting according to these, he imperceptibly finds imposed on them, by interaction with reality, a real structure, a determined pattern. As a result of experience, his prayers for rain are made at the beginning of the rainy season, his fertility rites are performed in spring. He prays to the sun to rise at dawn, and does not ask it to rise immediately after it has set. The inhabitants of desert lands do not pray for rain. Thus all his self-feeling, projected into outer reality, is organised by it, and what were at first all-powerful emotions, apparently dominating reality, became words emotionally charged,

and yet organised and 'influenced' by reality, and, finally those become symbols (mathematics) which are like a transparent dress conforming to the shape of outer reality. All this has been achieved by his active interpenetration with reality. (Newtonian 'forces' of gravity still retain a colouring of magic, but already the medium is almost colourless.)

In doing so man has also become conscious of 'himself'. He sees his body as a part of the environment; as subject to the same laws. He sees parts of his body, no longer as seats of emotions, but as seats of physiological functions. He sees himself as part of the determined unity of reality. He becomes not merely conscious *as* a self, but conscious *of* himself. He, the subject, becomes to himself an object.

He sees this determined unity as a changing unity of opposites, and himself as an active opposite, realising his affects, not blindly and unknowingly but according to the necessities of the Universe. He has become conscious of necessity, and therefore of all reality.

The fluidity of the affects remains. The affects are attached to ideas, and his ideas therefore remain fluid, but he does not now suppose that in organising his ideas according to his affective drives he is altering reality. He is only altering himself. That is to say he has ceased to create mythologies, creeds, schemes of salvation and theologies, and become an artist, aware that his story, picture, or sound-group is not a reflex of actual reality (as the priests maintain) but an art work. Or, if the ideas rather than the affects are his main interest in this shuffling, he knows he is not altering reality, but experimenting with possible changes as a scientist and putting forward hypotheses.

Man, then, has completely found himself. This is not the end only of man's prehistoric stage. This inaugurates the most eventful age of man. It is precisely art and science

that are more fluid and evolutionary than magic and religion. When magic and religion end, therefore, the prehistoric stage of man's evolution ends, and he has at last completely found himself. He has become conscious, not only of outer reality but of himself, as part with it of the one active process.

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And then, too, he has necessarily become conscious of society. We have so far stated the interpenetration in terms of one average man and nature, but this interpenetration is only the outcome of the increase in complexity of society, and thus when man is finally in a position to become conscious of the complete, active, subject-object relation, a whole fabric of social being has been built up, a complex and rich organism, of which he must now become conscious in order to achieve the final integration.

It is just because the interpenetration is the result of a social economic process, handling real matter, real nature and real men, that it is not a simple ideal movement, but slowly and painfully developed. It is because consciousness is the product of social life that magic and religion have the complex elaborate history they do have. It is because of the laws of social relations, of which man is until the end unconscious, that man seems to find himself and lose himself again and again. This is because at the best he only finds himself as he is not, in the way he finds himself in Aristotle, Plato, Lucretius, Plotinus, Ockham, Aquinas, Hobbes, Helvetius, Kant, and Hegel; he finds himself as an individual in civil society. He is not this. This conception shuts off from his self-knowledge huge areas of himself, and drives him to and fro from one contradiction to another. He finds himself fully and finally only as more than an individual in civil society, as an individual *because* of civil society, as a node in the social plexus.

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Sub-man must have been formed into society and humanity as the result of a process which forced on him economic production. By economic production we mean an active interpenetration of organism with nature that is not innate, is not genetically inherited, but is transmitted by external means, and yet is not environmental in the biological sense. It is cultural.

It is therefore almost a tautology to say that economic production is what makes man man, for any real definition of it at once delimits as a distinct sphere all the human qualities, and at the same time exhibits those qualities as social, as the result of man being in economic production *associated man*. Speech, ideas, reason, art, consciousness, writing tools, truth, morality, law, ethics and ideals—all these are seen to emerge as social and not individual properties. Though present in the individual they are generated as a social process and seem external.

The attempt to control nature in a new way is therefore forced on man by nature, and given in the very form of the attempt is society—the non-genetical inheritance of an active interpenetration of man and nature. This proves itself a richer and more powerful method than the biological interpenetration. The struggle becomes more acute; the war between man and nature is waged on more and more fronts; and it is precisely this undying hostility, this furious antagonism, which produces a greater humanisation of the environment by man and a greater environmentalisation of man by nature.

Having gathered itself apart from nature as something separate and antagonistic, man's self-feeling or consciousness is simultaneously projected on to nature. *This itself is the reflex of man's greater separation from nature by economic production and the increasing humanisation of*

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*nature (huts, tilled land, tamed animals) which that interpenetration produces.*

Therefore in the world of magic, it seems as if man's self-feeling was an active creative force, and that the emotions he felt stir within him were flooding the world of reality. They seem to possess *him* (for he has not yet found himself) and nature (for he is in active relation with nature), and to be sources of movement and power, moulding the world of phenomena to their shape. The world therefore becomes interpreted in terms of these affects, but since affects cannot be bodied forth socially and interpretation is a social action, these affects become interpreted in terms of the stock of ideas socially available, drawn from the social activity of the community, and in terms of the actions and behaviour of men in society. This very interpretation changes them, and we have therefore a mythology in which ordinary terms, the description of ordinary activities, and ordinary men, women, and animals become large, sacred, rigid, hieratic, awesome and hybrid. We have a series of actions which become formalised, stereotyped, emotional and abstract—the ritual dances, ceremonies and initiations. This body of magic ideas and behaviour acts and reacts upon profane ideas and behaviour but in a primitive community never becomes isolated from them. Most activities and ideas have a magical element; most magical activities have a social function.

Now because such a magic is the by-product of the social relations engendered by economic production, it advances and develops equally with production at the primitive level of society. Economic production is realising magic's promises. In magic the primitive's desires become detached as beneficent or evil spirits with power to change and mould reality to their will. This is precisely what economic production does—it humanises the environment. Man's desire

for plenty, externalised as the god plenty, does through economic production make the wilderness blossom and hunting prosper.

Magic presupposes a vast power not actually realised by primitive economic production. Admittedly, but economic production at the bourgeois level will give man powers undreamed of by the primitives, and then, precisely because the intemperate desires of magic are at last 'realised', made real (and *changed* in thus becoming concrete), magic itself will disappear, having been sucked into reality. Until then magic, though generated by economic production, is in antagonism to it, and this antagonism, by reaching always beyond man's powers now, drives him on in hope and confidence to new levels of production.

This process also acts as a kind of channel for magic, and gives it its characteristic shape. It produces a distinction between 'black' and 'white' magic. 'White' magic is social magic; it is magic rooted in economic production. It is magic which does not, for example, demand manna in the desert, or sit back and ask the gods to reap and sow the fields or Robin Goodfellow to make the butter. It is magic which 'asks the blessing of the gods', or 'brings mana', force, magic power upon all the social activities concerned in economic production. It asks this power and this blessing upon the arduous labour of the harvest, the hopeful spring sowing, the making of canoes and of huts, the driving of animals, the various crises associated with the development of such economic units as the family, the class, or the clan—marriage, birth, initiation and death. This magic is not a substitute for such economic production. It does not ask the gods to ripen the grains at once, or demand of magic in this world immortal life. It is a relish to economic production. It asks the gods to put heart and luck into the labour. By holding out the divine certainty of harvest, or

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the promise of children, or the magic enforcement of game, it gives man courage and heart for the lengthy labours required before his satisfaction. It does this by the dance, the chant, the fable and myth, the feast in common.

Since the gods and the forces which man has projected by magic into nature are mere embodiments and reflections of his own self-feeling, and since the purpose of magic ceremonies is simply to awaken such emotions in his heart, there is a reality in magic. The gods, which were originally personal emotions projected into nature in social clothes, become in magic ceremonies stripped of their clothes, and return again into the heart as bare emotions. but now changed by their intervening life. They are taken out of the social cold storage of mythology. The god comes again into the worshipper; the worshipper is said to become the god, as in Dionysian rites—and truly, for the god was never more than the social crystallisation of the affects of a number of worshippers, which now return into them simultaneously.

Though magic is a reality, it is a *fantastic* reality. Affects and outer reality are blended, and confusingly blended. One distorts the other; man has not yet learned to distinguish them in science and art. Yet the very interpenetration which begets their distortion also ensures at this stage their mutual correction. Magic does not replace economic production: it is a special offshoot of it, and therefore is a distorted reflection of it. But it is a conscious, cultural reflection, portable, easily inherited and easily modified. These conveniences outweigh the distortions. Because magic, by reason of its association with economic production, contains in its mythology and ritual the correct operations for sowing and reaping or hunting, crystallises the family and tribal social relations, is a compendious calendar and tribal guide, and can be handed on and shared socially, it is an invaluable ally to economic production. It is a special social conscious-



ness of economic production, of the functioning of the tribe in relation to nature.

It is thus parent of science. In proportion as economic production develops and becomes a division of labour, magic splits up and soon ceases to reflect man's direct relation to nature. It ceases to be an almanac and storehouse of the more abstract and generalised economic experiences. It becomes on the one hand art, in which all its affective organisation crystallises, and on the other hand science, in which all its cognitive organisation is marshalled. Thus with the development of art and science magic as an important vital element in economic production disappears because the very development of economic production which it has helped to bring about has made it unnecessary. Man has found himself. He has separated himself from the environment again, in art and science, not absolutely but as part of a new and more active interpenetration. Magic now only survives, not as the proud flower of social life, mother of all social power and status, but as something lingering on in interstices and crevices.

Even while the development of science and art reveals more truly the precise relation between man and nature, between man's self-feeling and nature's necessity, a relation which magic only imperfectly expressed, the division of labour in economic production had provided a development in magic. The two developments overlapped. Magic disappeared, became outcast and suspect, became increasingly replaced by science and art, and at the same time magic re-appeared in a new and more powerful form. It became religion.

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In fact of course religion was always latent in magic. We call it religion only when it shows an organisation, a coherence, a tough, visible structure. This organisation,

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coherence and structure are themselves only possible as the result of the development of economic production, through the division of labour, to a level where society becomes complex and highly organised. The development of classes in society makes magic into religion, and gives religion a characteristic form reflecting the class structure in turn, as the form of a specific level of economic production. Even at the earliest level of economic production, religion is visible in men's religious attitude towards the dead. The dead and the not-dead are the two great divisions of primitive society which seem almost to stand to each other in the relation of exploited to exploiting classes. The living owe their productive level to the capital, the instruments of production, the instruction, the wisdom, and the transmitted culture of the dead who therefore continue to live in the interstices of the society they have departed from in body. This half-life of the dead, constantly recalled to the living by their instructions, their leavings and their social formulations, is the other-world survival of the dead in all primitive societies which, as the researches of anthropologists increasingly show, is probably the most important element in primitive religious beliefs. This immortality of the dead is a fantastic reality. The dead really live on socially in the inherited culture of society, but to the primitive they live fantastically, clothed in the affective and concrete images of his dreams in another, ghostly world.

Just as magic expressed man's confused perception of the relation of man's self-feeling to nature's necessities, and disappears when man finds himself in a true relation to nature in science and art, so religion expresses man's confused perception of the relation of man's self-feeling to society's necessities, and disappears when man completely finds himself in society. Until then, religion seems separate from magic, and seems to tower above science and art, for

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science and art are still distorted and confused by the confusion of man's self-feeling, and have not yet realised themselves in society. Religion expresses—and therefore defends—a class-confused society, a society whose view of itself is only a fantastic reality because its economic production still functions within the limits imposed by a ruling class. The struggle against religion, unlike the struggle against magic, is therefore a struggle against class. The struggle of one religion against another is the struggle of one class against another, and the struggle against all religion can only be realised as the struggle for a classless society. Only when conditions are ripe for the creation of such a society, therefore, can the struggle against religion be the important turning-point of ideological activity.

Just as magic is a confused perception of man's relation to reality, but, in spite of its confusion, proves more valuable and more powerful than the unconsciousness of beasts, because it is a conscious perception and therefore a *social* perception, so religion, although a confused perception of man's relation to society, is more valuable than no perception of social relations at all. Indeed it is essential to the early development of 'civilised' society. As long as economic production remains below the point at which classes can vanish, so long the evolution of religion merely expresses the struggle between different forms of class societies. All those social relations in which production relations emerge to consciousness disguised and veiled, are social relations which inevitably include religion.

In primitive societies, where division of labour is hardly practised, social relations have not developed such complexity that a bewildering superstructure is interposed between man and the basis of his life, his struggle with nature. Man finds himself in association with others directly confronted by nature. In this fight magic is the heartener,

the confused symbol of man's powers, the affect broken loose and humanising the environment. In so far as it is secreted by this struggle and regularised by participation in economic production, magic is also to the tribe the textbook manual and educator in the technique of association for economic production. It thus *is* reality, although a fantastic reality. Archæology finds all men's first formulations of causality—the calendar, cosmogony, and physiology—and of affective realities—art, dance, tragedy—and of social relations—the family, the class, the tribe—emerge first in a magical dress.

Magic can also be used independently of man associated in economic production. These magical affects, made detached and plastic by the rituals of the tribe, can be used by the individual against other individuals. The word, which is a social creation and derives its power as a tool from its social rôle, can be harnessed in private spells and chants to private ends—against personal enemies or for personal goods.

Now it is not possible for such magic to add to the tribe's knowledge because it is not secreted in the process of economic production and therefore is not pressed against the shape of reality. It is not a science in embryo. It cannot be tested out in practice by society, and so rectified. It is private, whispered, individualistic. It is not deeply intertwined with outer reality, like public magic, by partaking of economic production. It is not transmitted as a body of experience for tribal use. It is therefore a degeneration—the use of tribal capital for personal aims. Society made magic, for it made the common word and gesture which seem to possess a power beyond the individual. It does possess a power beyond the individual, it possesses the power of associated men, which is composed of and yet external to individuals, which is not innate but leads a

strange life of its own and is fitly symbolised in the form of ghosts and forces. This social power the wizard uses for individual ends. Black magic or witchcraft as opposed to white magic or ritual is therefore rightly condemned as anti-social, disruptive and dangerous. It is wicked, just as white magic is holy—'Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live'. Because it is unconventional and does not use socially recognised forms embodying the structure of society as its channel, it is opposed to white magic and religion. Thus all innovators in religion will be met by religion with the cry of 'witches', 'heretics', 'wicked men', because they negate the social norms of the time. All such negation seems wicked. The question is whether they are rebels and revolutionaries expressing new productive forces struggling for release or merely maladapted individuals making anti-social sorties. If they are harbingers of a successful revolution, they in their turn will become holy.

Magic remains at the level of magic only in a primitive society. In such a society, economic production knows no division of labour except that arising from genotypical as distinct from imposed classes. Such classes are formed by the sexes, which in turn may be divided into children, initiated, adolescents, bachelors, married, and aged. Such a primitive society is best seen in Australia, but is common to all tribes still at the food-gathering stage of culture.

When economic production passes beyond food-gathering to settled agriculture, a division of labour takes place which involves in each unit a man who acts as director of labours, keeper of the calendar, custodian of the social capital in the form of seeds, implements, or garnered fruits. This is the village headman, who becomes the chief, and, as agriculture develops to the stage where it requires perhaps irrigation works, huge granaries, and the creation of roads and canals, he becomes the god-king, ending as the apex of the

pyramid of subordinate or autonomous directors of operations—priests, lords, mandarins and the like. When agriculture has passed from gardening to grain growing, he emerges as the Pharaoh of Egypt, the kings of Babylon and the Mesopotamian city states, the Emperor of China, the Mikado of Japan. His exact position and his relation to similar exalted personages depend on the development of economic production, which in turn will depend upon the topography and climate of the area, its relation with other areas, its own past history, and the internal forces produced by the development of the superstructure.

Such a man derives his magic power not, as Frazer imagines, from his cunning in imposing himself as a magician on his 'naturally' credulous neighbours but because his rôle, forced on him by the division of labour, makes him in fact custodian of those supra-individual forces which arise from division of labour and the association of men. Such division and association does wield powers which are more than the individual himself can wield in the struggle against nature. As long as his perception of the origin of these forces remains confused, the individual feels that they are external to him and more powerful than him. He therefore abases himself to these forces. Since these forces are plainly wielded by the king or chief, they seem concentrated in the person of the chief or king, who therefore seems awful, holy, sacred, all-powerful and divine. The precise relation of this chief to the symbols in which the magical consciousness of the tribe has bodied forth its social affects, depends on a chain of historical circumstances, which in no case follow exactly the same route. The relationship between the chief and the animal or human personifications of these social forces is always close. The chief is the incarnation or son or favoured instrument of such forces. The god converses with him or dwells in him.

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The family is the economic unit of primitive society: the medium by which food—which does not come on a market—is distributed and by which the inherited capital of the tribe in the form of technique, language and the memorised plexus of social relations, is transmitted to the babe. It is the primary educational unit of the tribe, becoming increasingly important with the increase in size of the tribe, which forces the family to take over many clan functions. Such an increase in size can only take place as the result of the development of economic production. Thus the god-king or holy chief comes into being at the same time as the family unit becomes of increased importance as the main economic channel. In the chief's family his children will learn the rudiments of his special task and be themselves therefore specially qualified to perform it. Thus a unique virtue will seem to inhere in the blood royal: the sacredness of kingship, derived from direction of the community's labour power, will seem hereditary. A ruling class will have completely emerged, whose power and prerogatives, because of the confused nature of man's perception of society and his deficient powers of abstraction, will seem to be inherent in and arise from the chief's blood.

The division of labour in agriculture, because of its efficiency, develops rapidly. It is checked only by territorial considerations, or by impact with other developed forms growing from other centres and meeting on a common boundary. Smaller units will be absorbed. As the organisation of agriculture grows more complex, so the social relations arising from it become more elaborate and more pyramidal. Whole new classes may arise—priests, warriors, clerks, local lords and chiefs, all apparently depending on the god-king at the apex. The stabilising element of the whole is the right of the ruler, expressed as religion, as the projection on to him of all those 'loose' affects, all those

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symbolised social forces, which stand to the individual man as external, heroic realisations of his own limited desires and powers, something holy and apart.

Thus the tutelary deity or chief god of such an economy is closely identified with the god-king, and represents the power of the tribe, city, or kingdom as an associated group of individuals—represents everything in the association which is more than the mere sum of the powers or separate individuals. In so far as the economic production of the society will turn upon sun, wind, rain, and sea he will also invest himself with the affects which man has projected into these natural phenomena. These phenomena have become for him, as they have not for the animal, objects of interest, because their behaviour affects his sowing and reaping and building. Such a society tends to be monotheistic in that the god which expresses the solidarity of the tribe is exalted against all other gods—as Jehovah against Baal—and is held to account for all the successes of this tribe against others. Such a monotheism may become the medium of a whole national resurgence, as when the Semitic tribes of Arabia, a pastoral people, hurled themselves upon the settled peoples of Europe, to the cry, 'We are all one people: join our economy or die'. ('There is no God but Allah. Acknowledge him, or pay tribute, or be put to the sword.') It does not exclude however the accompaniment of the tribal god by a host of lesser spirits, cherubim, seraphim, Beelzebub, and other personifications of the forces of nature, as against personifications of the social unity. Yet man's homage to these forces is always more individualistic and personal. The one compelling homage which to ignore is to be really wicked, is the homage to the tribal god.

This pure monotheism cannot exist in a successful agricultural society. It can exist, as the example of Islam shows, in a successful pastoral society, where there is little



division of labour and all men are equal beneath the chief—Mohammed, Prophet of God, and his Caliph. Such an equality cannot exist in a society where the pyramiding of function involved in a settled agricultural society has been carried far. There are gradations of sacredness, and the ruling class is hierarchical. For that very reason Mohammedanism comes as a message of hope to an exploited class, and this accounts for its early fierce disruptive power. This necessarily collapsed as soon as a pastoral society, by its conquests and tribute drawing, became transformed into just another Asiatic despotism, and in spite of the survival of the rigid Mohammedan formula with its monotheistic proclamation of pastoral equality, the Mohammedan religion became for the exploited class filled with godlings, beatified disciples, and angels. The religion, though degenerate, is changed by its previous history. Mohammedanism, even in process of becoming another oriental despotism, retains a pastoral flavour of equality. It is more stable, and at a higher plane than the older religions. This in turn reacts upon its economy, which always remains more virile, seafaring, merchandising and nomad than a settled agricultural civilisation.

The pure flame of monotheism may of course be kept alive in an unsuccessful tribe which is not completely extinguished. Thus the Jews, situated on the main trade route of early civilisation and harried and battered on all sides, were compressed into a proud, prickly, bigoted society whose difficult economic life is reflected in their religion. But this very battering toughened them; and made of Judaism a consciousness which, as events proved, was to possess great survival value in the maelstrom of social relations of the East.

Monotheism of this kind is incompatible with despotic Imperialism. When for a brief time the Jewish tribe became

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Imperialising, and Solomon was even able to aspire to the hand of Pharaoh's daughter, Solomon took to himself strange gods. The quick collapse of Solomon's empire brought about a return to monotheism and the collapse itself was attributed to the unauthorised additions of Solomon.

When an agricultural kingdom imperialises, the unit it swallows up becomes part of the economy of the kingdom. None the less it retains much of its original structure. For example a Mesopotamian or Nilotic 'city-farm' swallowed up by a monarchy will retain its local governor, who now becomes subordinate to the monarchy; and the local deity who symbolises the forces of the community will pass into the national pantheon. It will depend on the importance of the unit swallowed whether the god or goddess will become incarnate in the tutelary deity of the nation, or merely get a seat in the pantheon, and whether it remains a god or becomes a 'hero'. In any event the local deity will continue to be a cult at the headquarters of the unit. Such imperialism should not be confused with the modern Imperialism or Mohammedan Imperialism, in which two *different* economies one temporarily superior to the other, happen to collide. There is then no fusion of religions for the economies do not fuse. Either the relation is merely one of tribute drawing, in which case the conquered society keeps its economy and religion as in most of India to-day; or else one economy swallows up the other, which therefore adopts (with minor differences) the religion of the conquering race. This is seen in that part of India affected by bourgeois culture, which therefore becomes Westernised and bourgeoisified. It would be better to call the Imperialism of Egypt and China, which resulted in the fusion of the societies involved, 'expansion', rather than Imperialism in the tribute-drawing or bourgeois sense.

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Thus a fully developed pantheon, such as that of Egypt, Babylon, China, or India, represents a kind of telescoping of the social history of the peoples involved. The various incarnations of the ruling deity, and the other occupants of the pantheon, represent swallowed social units (such as the nomes of Egypt) of greater or less importance. Myths, such as that of Isis and Osiris or the Chinese Sky-goddess, embody a magic account of the society's economic production. Other natural forces enter as 'promoted' spirits or ghosts, and the development of warrior and learned classes, and of all other forms of division of labour, results in gods presiding over such activities. The tutelary god has a prime Minister or Vizier, a secretary, a wife. The profane family is reflected in a holy one. The inverted world of religion acquires a bewildering complexity, has a long history of its own, and exerts a reciprocal effect on the society which engenders it. The labours of archæologists on the records of Egypt, Babylon, China, India, Assyria, Persia, and Crete can only partially uncover this history, for the most living part of religion, its ritual and its active social being, is lost. Only the bones of the organism remain. None the less enough remains to make increasingly clear the accuracy of Marx's analysis, based on the work of Morgan and Feuerbach.

Communities which exist by gardening, instead of agriculture, and where such gardening is (as still to-day in Africa) the monopoly of women, will worship a Mighty Mother, symbolising in female form the productive forces of the tribe. Since the males of such tribes are generally war-like, the Mighty Mother will be accompanied by a war-god, standing to her in the equivocal relation of husband and son.

Because a division of labour continually secures increased productivity, a civilisation of this character—the settled

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agricultural culture of Egypt, Persia, China, Mexico, Peru, India, and Mesopotamia—continues to fuse into increasingly centralised despotisms. The individual in whose person all the forces of such a society are concentrated, the god-king, therefore becomes increasingly awful and sacred. Those individuals who regard all the forces wielded by society as alien to them become increasingly humble, for the discrepancy between their individual powers and the power wielded by society in the person of the despot has become enormous. Caught up in the elaboration of the economic process, they are mere passive labouring units—slaves.

This religious alienation of themselves from the forces of society, this religious 'humility', is of course the reflex of a similar alienation in the realm of right or law. The products of society seem to an increasing extent to be due, not to them as individuals but to the forces arising from their association, which forces as we have seen, are all concentrated in the person of the god-king. The god-king comes therefore to own all these products, and to his subjects is granted only as much as will maintain them alive, and even this is a gift of the god-king, springing from his beneficence and mercy, and in no way a right due to them from him.

Meanwhile, round the god-king cluster all the administrative, clerical, priestly and warrior castes who receive a portion of the sacred effulgence of the monarch, for they too are custodians of part of the forces of society, and therefore with a qualified right in its products. Unlike the lower class—the subjects, slaves, or common people—this class has rights and privileges, and a sacredness which, while less than the despots, is still enough to separate them from the rightless. In a highly developed agricultural economy, there are products over and to spare beyond what is needed to maintain alive the exploited class.

This official class or aristocracy is naturally interested in

the maintenance of the system, yet their own sacredness and the fact that the running of all the forces of society is in their hands, give them a less absolute belief in the official religion. They have a strong sceptical tendency, and invariably generate a 'refined' religion of their own, free from the 'superstitions' of the 'mob', such as the Confucianism of China, the 'esoteric' teaching of Egypt, and the Brahmanic 'philosophy' of India. Hence, should the god-king prove personally obnoxious, they have little hesitation in replacing him by a palace-revolution.

There can be only one end to such a class society. There is an increasing split between the ruling class and the active, exploited class. The one becomes more and more functionless, parasitic, and 'philosophic', and the other more and more exploited, miserable, and superstitious. The productive process falls more and more into the hands of the 'ignorant class', who are pressed still more keenly for tribute, until a general impoverishment of agriculture and failure of the national economy begins to take place.

Such a culture soon becomes a hollow shell, which still keeps up a semblance of vigour, but is in fact slowly decaying. Its decay may last several centuries. The revolt of the exploited class will be sporadic and disorganised, for the nature of an economy of this kind is not such as to develop in the toilers the qualities which will make them in their turn able to rule. Such a decaying culture may split up into a number of feudal units, and revitalise itself because, in so doing, each local chief rallies round him as supporters his local exploited clan, and to do so improves their lot. The process will however only be repeated again, and out of local provinces will rise another Emperor. Or the kingdom may be exploited by a similar kingdom at a more vigorous stage of development. Or it may be over-run by pastoral invaders who with their more equalitarian social relations will

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revitalise the economy, only to see the kingdom perish once again in the misery of the exploited class as the economy drops.

This is the history of what Marx called the 'Asiatic' form of culture. It explains the despotisms, decays, disruptions, and dragging deaths-in-life of the great Empires of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, China, and Central and South America. All such empires are based on a settled agricultural economy involving irrigation works and the extensive co-ordination of agriculture. Their religion reflects this development and the way in which man's self-feeling which has lost itself is projected in an inverted world. Inverted—because man's abject humiliation before the forces of that world is a parody of his own exaltation by association in society. Yet as a parody, it is also criticism. Because of his humility, his exaltation is alienated from him and invested in another. The powers he creates are assumed by the ruling class, before which he abases himself. The law of his society, which includes his self-alienation from the goods he produces, is just that distortion of the real facts of social life which generates the inverted world of religion. Thus we see what Marx meant when he said that religion is an inverted consciousness of the world because that world is itself an inverted world. The exploited class, which is the real source of the productive power of society, places itself at the bottom of the pyramid by giving to the parasitic class the whole of the goods it produces beyond the bare minimum necessary for existence. The overt social structure is itself an inversion of the reality behind it. At first the ruling class is functional: as it becomes more sacred and division of labour grows it becomes more functionless and parasitic. Such a world becoming constantly more fully inverted is just the world which produces a more and more elaborate religion acting as a counterbalance. Finally, from having

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been a vital factor in economic production, magic, grown into developed religion, has become the bulwark of a functionless class and therefore one of the fetters on economic production.

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Into such an inverted world are necessarily projected all the distortions caused by the discrepancy between society's outward forms and its real content. Such a society feeds its exploited with products belonging 'of right' entirely to the rulers: therefore the divinities are kind and generous. The feeding, the very life of the exploited class, depends entirely on a society in which they are alienated from the means of production: therefore their whole existence and life is dependent on God, and since all good things, all force and power and knowledge, are resident in society, the misery can only come from another source, either from an anti-god or devil, or from their selves—from their sinfulness. Thus sin, which in primitive society is restricted to anti-social acts—the breaking of taboos or the malconduct of magical ceremonies—becomes in more developed societies an almost permanent condition of the populace. The religious dream life, by a well-known mechanism, becomes a compensation or reflex of the waking life. In proportion as life becomes more miserable and deprived, one's dreams become richer and more full of content. In dreams, man's ghost seems to wander and leave the body, and thus it becomes an article of such religions that in a future life the ghost, wandering in the other, inverted world, will inherit all the good things of that world.

Separate, ghostly existence as a concept is a result of dream. Immortal or long enduring existence as a concept is the result of the transmission by society of history and names

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and it is true that in this traditional other-world of society's, men's emanations do enjoy a life beyond life. This abstract fact becomes fantastically concrete in religion. At first this life beyond life is a perquisite of the king or famous men and so more accurately reflects the social basis of the belief; but as the economy develops and an exploited class grows, its urgent misery drives it to a demand for other-worldly goods. Since these ghostly goods can be granted without depriving the ruling class of real goods, the common people finds itself—for what it is worth—in possession of the fantastic privileges of its betters, to lead a life beyond life in the inverted world of religion. Successive layers of excavation clearly reveal this process in Egypt, where the immortality association with funerary rites, at first a perquisite of the god-king, gradually filters down to all classes. This fantastic realisation which is at once the expression of real *misery* and a protest against that *real* misery, which is the sigh of the hard-pressed creature, therefore, like a neurotic or psychotic compensatory mechanism, acts as a stabilising factor against the growing misery of the people. Religion now finally, in the course of this long development, has become a safety-valve—the opium of the people. In the last stages such a society's religion has as its most important content, not a pantheon of power, but salvation, release from sin (i.e. from temporal misery), eternal life, divine love and consolation and fatherhood—or motherhood. It has become the 'soul' of a soulless world.

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But even the god-king's will is subject to checks. His prayers for harvest do not always prevail: this cannot be always interpreted as the sin of his people. Floods and earthquakes and pestilences come. Man, in spite of economic production, has not completely subdued nature. In other



words the gods who symbolise the powers of economic production are not all-powerful. There is a process which even they cannot subdue.

This process therefore emerges as Fate, Law, Kismet, Karma, as a mechanical set process which even gods must obey. Because man is still projecting his self-feeling into nature, this force appears as a Will, but because it is distinguished from the gods it is a disembodied Will or something woven mechanically from a thread. This Will is the residue of magic. It represents magic's recognition—after it has reached the more thoughtful and stabilised interpenetration with reality involved in an economic production that is religious—that there are things beyond the power of economic production. This disembodied Will, which sucks within itself all those phenomena proved not amenable to economic production but observed as a result of economic production, is therefore both the negation and the product of magic. It is the recognition, first of an arbitrary will, later (as we shall see) of a Law, which even the gods—i.e., society—cannot override. It is causality or determination in embryo. As society develops, determinism develops, for all society's explorations of reality as a result of economic production, generate fresh evidence of processes which cannot be overridden. But just because they cannot be overridden, they can be predicted. They can be *used*. Causality or Kismet, becoming science, is once again fused with the economic production it at first negated. Society, by becoming conscious of necessity, becomes free of it.

Asiatic culture cannot, however, reach such a full understanding. The most refined philosophies of the ruling class of such a culture (Chinese and Indian) can only see reality as a theatre of wills or projected affects, for the overt forms of their societies depend on various rights to effect one's will, to dispose arbitrarily according to one's individual

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desire of one's land and subjects. The real content of the society is veiled from them, for such a world is an inverted world. The power of such a society does not in fact inhere in their wills but in the actions of the ruled class. Creativity does not flow from their desires as such, but only in so far as their desires enter as an active component into the actions of the exploited class and so into the productive movement of society.

In so far as their wills are *opposed* to the productive movement of society, they are merely obstructive, sucked of their real content, illusory and fantastic. To understand this would be to cease to be a ruling class, *owning* the means of production, and to become specialists, *working* the means of production. Hence such societies cannot advance beyond a philosophy of idealism, in which Will and Mind are dominant and Ideas have a supra-material, absolute existence outside the heads of men. Such an idealism is tawdry and limited because it commits the thinker to a closed, eternal world bound inside the categories of present theory, instead of presenting an open, timeful world in which theory is growing and enriching itself in active penetration of matter. In the same way this society's idea of causality, symbolised as Fate, can never escape from an arbitrariness, an air of magic and subjectivity, because cause is always seen as cause by a conscious force, or entity, which is simply the ruling class's affective will projected into reality as an absolute.

In India, with its streams of invaders and constant movement, such a culture produces the pullulating pantheon of Hinduism, or achieves, in the Empire of Asoka, the metaphysical nihilism of Buddhism, in which society, having achieved its utmost limit, cannot escape from its social fetters or the infection of an exploited class, and sees stretching before it in all its helplessness the iron wheel of

things, from which it would be a blessing to escape. Man seems to find himself for a moment in Buddhism, only to lose himself, for it is the product of a ruling class grown pessimistic of its office, and seeing blessedness as the cessation of will. It survives only by becoming a new religion, full of 'salvation' and divine love. In China, more shielded from invasion, the same development produces a static, rigid pantheon in the sky, with the causality of the Way above it, and at its apex the divine son of the Sky-Goddess, the Emperor, incarnation of the social forces on earth.

China and South and Central America remained units in isolation. India became a melting pot of invading waves. But Egypt, and to a lesser degree Babylonia and Crete, as centres of a more stable civilisation gradually exported to the fringes of the Mediterranean their wheat and settled agricultural production—all the technique which had made them elaborate centres of despotism. In the differing physical conditions of Greece, Asia Minor and Italy, however, this technique never advanced beyond the formation of city states. By the time these states had developed to the stage of small kingdoms, based on cities, settled agricultural production had ceased to be the main productive force of the societies they represented. They became, by reason of their topographical situation and the natural development of their fishing activities, real trading centres. Their smallness as units, separated by mountains and straits, encouraged trade—the sea was handy and a general highway. Shipbuilding and the like they already had from Egypt. Thus a new society emerged, in which the productive forces of society were disguised and made complex by the intervention of trafficking, and there was a numerous class which did not owe its position or its power to its specific place in the agricultural division of labour, but seemed to snatch its wealth out of the air. Such a society was even

further confused by the incursion of pastoral peoples, as conquering waves, who imposed for a short time an alien economy, pantheon and social organisation upon the peoples they subdued.

Thus an entirely new economic development took place in which the city, as the trading centre, acquired a hegemony over agriculture, and the ruling class was at least partly a trading class. Such states, with their competitive basis, are necessarily disruptive—they are 'free' states quarrelling always about their privileges and freedoms, jealous of the liberties of their markets, and only reluctantly combining in the face of a common danger. It was bourgeoisdom in embryo, but the basis of all such states still remained agricultural, and the slave class created by settled agricultural economy was taken over, as a system, by the 'free' pastoral peoples and became the basic relation of agriculture and commodity production generally. Hence, in spite of the market for commodities, there was no market for labour-power—only for slaves. The conditions were not yet ripe for the development of bourgeois economy.

In such societies the tutelary deity of the city symbolised the productive forces of society, and production revolved round the city with its protective walls, and the domain it ruled. The god-king or hero or mighty mother of the local economy appears to fuse with the local pantheon of the incoming pastoral people—the father patriarch and his family. The more equalitarian economy of the pastoral people results in the gathering round the petty, divine king of a gerontocracy who ultimately depose him and are themselves—in Athens and elsewhere—deposed by the rising merchant class who form a democracy. This marks the apex of Greek development, and in Rome takes the form of the transfer from the senatorial to the 'knightly' class. The very strife between the agricultural and merchant ruling

classes is insoluble within the framework of a slave-owning society, and ultimately brings about the break-down of Hellenic economy. But before its collapse it has given birth, in the momentary efflorescence of Athenian, Ionian and Corinthian prosperity, to the culture whose bold speculation reflects the scepticism and untraditional cosmopolitanism of the rising merchant classes. Hellenic philosophy, however, in spite of its moments of splendid balance, never escapes from the limitations of a slave-owning class whose slaves, interposed as a buffer between themselves and nature, prevent their philosophy emerging as completely positive and scientific. In Ionia it is revolutionary: with Plato more conservative: always it is fresh and critical, but always it is unable to get beyond a self-feeling which has not found itself. It remains a religious philosophy, which projects Will into nature, sees causality as Fate or Divine Law, and explains reality in terms of human Purposes, Forms or Ideas existing independently of human brains or real matter.

In its prime able to overturn the despotism of the East and penetrate into India, Greece becomes, as slave-owning develops on a merchant basis, the centre of intolerable antagonisms. It thus falls a victim to the centralised despotic monarchy. The Empires with their god-kings come into being again. Merchant towns, such as Alexandria, remain the centre of scepticism and a critical attitude to divinity, but the demoralisation of the slaves is reflected in the universal reign of the various mystery religions, full of salvation and immortal life. They had existed in the early agricultural despotisms of Mycenaean civilisation (Demeter and the Eleusinian mysteries) but had sunk into the background with the invasion of the Hellenes. These Hellenes had a full-blooded pastoral economy, in which life, lived to the full in this world, required only a short, shadow

existence in the next. The mystery religions emerged triumphantly again when this Hellenic rejuvenation, so brief and glorious, in turn produced an enormous exploited class, demanding in its inverted world the life denied it in the real world.

While therefore the East continued its old despotisms, and the Greek god-kings flourished, blown upon by scepticism only in the cities, Rome was establishing in Italy a hegemony which no Greek city, with its less favourable topography, was able to achieve. Rome too had an agricultural god-king (Saturn) who was replaced by a pastoral god-patriarch (Jove). In Rome too, therefore, it may be supposed that a pastoral people conquered a settled agricultural people, and the resulting fusion begot a king and a gerontocracy (the senate) which finally deposed the king, and was itself deposed by a trading class. It is no accident that Rome on the Tiber was a trading centre, and the emergence of her senate and equestrian classes must have been due to the emergence of a merchant class beneath the veil of agricultural and pastoral social relations. This class rapidly becomes a predatory and powerful class, its army of 'citizens' being far superior to Oriental despotisms or more decadent Greek cities. Its religion, so similar to the Greek, yet reflects the greater insularity and 'purity' of Roman development, farther removed from Egyptian and Eastern ideology. Patriarchial relations, relics of apastoral people, affect the ideology of the ruling class and give it a sternness and absoluteness in its dealings with other peoples that is regarded as typically Roman.

The spread of Roman influence necessarily involves the creation of a huge predatory class, the senatorial and knightly, whose increasing wealth is the reflection of the increasing exploitation, unknown to those Asiatic despotisms in which the ruling class at least remains part and parcel of

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the economy it exploits. The Roman ruling class is, however, a trading, absentee class. Such a non-functional class, in which the forces of society seem to be wielded by men who take no active interest in the worlds they rule, gives rise to stoicism, in which the gods are absentee landlords, and the world shuffles on as well as it can. Such a religion can only arise in a general demoralisation such as that which overtook the Roman world in the last years of the Republic. The absentee, predatory class, by their very absenteeism, had prepared their own downfall, and it was possible first for Cæsar and then Augustus and his successors to rule through an administrative class of freemen, a new bureaucracy whose creation involves the death of the older exploiters. The Roman Empire takes on more and more Oriental characteristics, and, as slave-owning economy develops again on the basis of local and centralised bureaucracies, with the trading cities included in the social plexus, we have the final stage of classical economy. The pivot of the stage has become the god-king, the Emperor, who rules his people as the master rules his slaves, and in whom seem concentrated all the productive forces of society. Beneath him are grouped an aristocracy who derive their 'sacredness' from him and regard him with veiled scepticism. Their own religion is some or other form of a refined idealistic philosophy, which in a certain gap opened between the gods and reality, reflects the complexity of this stage of economy, in which the god-king rules indirectly through various channels and no longer dwells in the midst of society as in the simpler Egyptian despotism. But to the vast exploited class the god-king and the tutelary deity he represents, is still the incarnation of the forces of society. Round him clusters whatever cult or pantheon has been inherited, but his figure is central and he guarantees the Roman Law, creation of the new bureaucracy, which secures the smooth functioning of

the productive economy, and at once oppresses them and keeps them this side of extinction.

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Such a society can only repeat the history of past despotisms. The cleavage between the slave-owners and the slaves, the vain rebellion of the slaves, brings about an increasing exploitation of the slave and serf classes, and an increasing impoverishment of society. The structure, because of its complexity, size, and military efficiency, is not as yet challengeable by any other power outside.

It is however challenged by an internal power. Christianity appears, a new religion in which the eternal happiness promised by mystery religions in the next world is to be realised in this world by the practice of a new form of social relations—primitive communism. Each church is a group of the faithful holding all material goods in common, in possession of salvation, and waiting until Christ their King shall return to earth and realise the millenium in the universal reign of primitive communism. Whatever gave this programme its detailed form, however much it owed to the Essenes, to the Galilean village economy, to the personality of Christ, and to the nationalism of Palestine, it was evidently the bodying forth of the aspirations of the exploited class. It is a religion of revolution.

It is misleading to regard Christianity as simply another 'mystery' religion (such as Mithraism or the cult of Isis) which because of some superior attractiveness carried the day against its rivals. This is to see religion not as a social reality but as the adventure of an idea. The Isis and Mithraistic cults were ordinary products of Asiatic misery and classical decay, promising in the next world salvation and healing for the miseries of this. Christianity was distinct from religions of this kind because of its tougher, this-worldly content. The millenium was to come in this world,



the Kingdom of Heaven was to be realised *here*. It was led by a revolutionary figure—Christ, whose apparently unsuccessful rebellion had according to his disciples really been a triumph.

For a long time now the Roman Empire had been decaying, so that the social relations it represented had become a fetter on the productive powers. The god-Emperor and his staff had ceased to be functional units of society and had become mere tax-gathering and defence organs which were not even working efficiently as such. The decay of communications and the loosening of the economic cords that had held the Empire together, drove the god-king and his staff wildly about the Empire in an attempt to hold together with the superstructure of law and administration what was already falling apart as the result of the increasing decomposition of agriculture. The Empire was returning whence it had sprung, as the result of the impoverishment of the soil by *latifundia* and the general demoralisation of the exploited class. Local landlords were leaving their estates wholesale because of the increasing relative burden of taxation.

This economic devolution was reflected in the growth of Christianity, particularly in the large towns which as the bonds slackened were naturally the first to feel the functionlessness of the god-Emperor's *régime*. Christianity was the equivalent of a nationalist movement, but no nations existed in the cosmopolitan Roman Empire. The choice was between the city or local community and the Empire. The nearest to a nationalist movement was in Jerusalem and it was precisely in Jerusalem that Christianity arose round the person of a typical Jewish prophet, Jesus. The local exploiting class of Jerusalem, the 'Scribes and Pharisees', had however come to terms with the conqueror, the relation somewhat resembling that between the British Government

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and the de Valera Government in Ireland. Although their interests are opposed, both are rooted in the same class society and both therefore are opposed to a Workers' Republic of the type now being fought for there.\* Jesus evidently also had in mind a 'People's Republic', in which goods would be shared in common, there would be neither master nor man, and exploitation would cease. He believed it however to be possible within the framework of the existing State ('Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's'). In other words, he did not regard it as necessary that the seizure of power should take place as a preliminary to the inauguration of the People's Commune or Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, the idea of which—so poetically and idealistically unfolded—secured him his tremendous support among the working class of Palestine, who listened to his denunciations of the rich.

This reformist instead of revolutionary approach was just what secured the defeat of Christianity. Such demonstrations as that of the entry into Jerusalem showed the wide measure of popular support he had obtained, but with no programme of action directed to the seizure of power, this basis of popular support was useless. Jesus appears to have hesitated a long time before the choice of appearing as the Messiah and so focusing the nationalistic aspirations of the Jews. He finally claimed the position, yet as a Messiah who could not seize power but assume it by prayer, by 'magic'. Such was not the Jewish conception of the Messiah; it seemed indeed to sincere Jewish patriots a betrayal of the national revolution, and a familiar situation was enacted when the Pharisees consolidated their power and that of the Roman bosses on whom they depended by an impudent appeal to the national feeling of the Jews. Jesus was thus branded as a blasphemer—as 'anti-social'.

\* Circa 1936 (Ed.)

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Thus, by his treatment of the vital question of workers' power, Jesus had from the start ensured the defeat of his communist programme. That part of the programme which involved the actual coming into being of the communist state became inverted, because it was to come into being in a reformist way by its own ideal appeal—miraculously. The Kingdom of Heaven therefore gradually became 'the millenium' and eventually was altogether shifted into another world. The misery of the exploited classes of the Roman Empire was first reflected as a revolutionary possibility now, but finally became a dream, a compensatory wish-fulfilment like that of other mystery religions, a fantastic salvation criticising and yet stabilising real misery here. This reformist step appears to have been taken by Christ at the very moment when he forbade Peter to use violence. He was prepared to whip the money-changers out of the Temple but not out of the State. This fact itself reflected the inability of the exploited classes of the Roman Empire to organise a revolt with any success. In spite of Christ's denunciation of rich men, a policy of class collaboration was forced on Christianity by the demoralisation of the workers.

When Jesus was executed, therefore, it was natural that instead of regarding this as the first defeat in a long revolutionary war certain of ultimate victory (as the proletariat regarded the defeat of the Paris Commune) the followers of Jesus decided to see it as an other-worldly triumph, as a wish-fulfilment victory. But this apparently astute move—no doubt quite naïve and sincere—while it appeared to consolidate Christianity, also finally consolidated the reformist element in it. Since Jesus's victory was already realised, it was merely a matter of waiting for the Kingdom to come into being. The emphasis had already shifted from revolution in this world to salvation in the next. None the

less the tougher quality of Christianity as compared to the mystery religions was shown in the fact that at least the Kingdom of Heaven was to be realised soon *in this world*. The end of the world (i.e., the beginning of the ideal world-commune) was *at hand*.

The propagandist element of Christianity now centred in the organisation of the Churches and the love-feast. This was an attempt (rather like the modern co-operative movement) to realise the primitive communism of the Kingdom of Heaven within the framework of the existing state, through autonomous local communities.

All goods were to be held in common and administered by officials, the poor were to be cared for. All were equal within the Church or commune. The organisation had therefore something of the character, not only of a co-operative movement but of early forms of trade union organisation with their friendly and benefit activities. Such centres could be made active organs of revolutionary activity in the Roman Empire.

The movement grew rapidly. It had of course the advantage of dissemination in the first stages by a cosmopolitan body, the Jews, who were most active and influential in precisely those places—the large towns—where devolutionary tendencies were most strongly marked. The fact that Jesus had been executed by the native exploiting class prevented Christianity from being a Jewish national movement, and it soon spread to the uncircumcised.

It became dangerous to the Empire when it began to attract to itself all those elements of the ruling classes in the towns and in the army who found themselves in opposition to the centralising government of the Empire. These were the landlords so heavily taxed that they had to be ordered to remain on their estates, and the dispossessed and expropriated aristocrats and knights. These, corresponding to

the declassed or revolutionary *petite bourgeoisie* of to-day, gave a stiffening to what had been mainly a slave or *lumpen proletarian* movement. Thus stiffened and organised, Christianity had the courage openly to challenge the existing State power. Christians refused to worship the god-Emperor. Since the god-Emperor was the embodiment and focus of the social forces of the Empire this was an open revolutionary act; and it was accompanied by the formation of illegal self-governing units, the Church communes, which were just as revolutionary challenges to the existing fabric of social relations as the denial of the Emperor's divinity.

In spite of the general looseness and decay of the Roman Empire this challenge had to be met, and whenever an efficient Emperor was functioning, it was met by a vigorous counter-revolutionary drive. All the familiar apparatus of counter-revolution—slander, espionage, whipping up of racial feeling (the 'Nazarenes') and provocative acts (Nero's burning of Rome)—were used in the struggle. Of course the general dissolution of the Roman Empire ensured that for long periods and in many provinces no counter-revolutionary movement at all took place.

Christianity survived the persecution well. The growing burden of centralism produced a communist and devolutionary feeling everywhere. The Army and the Civil Service were infected with it; it even invaded the Emperor's household. But Christianity had been committed by Jesus to a fatal policy, that of passive resistance, or non-co-operation. It is therefore possible that in the collapsing Roman Empire Christianity played the same rôle as Gandhism in the collapsing British Empire in India and was the means whereby revolt was canalised and turned into safe forms of activity.

This itself in India is a reflection of the fact that Gandhism is a peasant movement and the peasants form a class which is not a class, which owing to the peasant's isolation cannot

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act in an organised manner; its members can act only as individuals. An individual cannot revolt forcibly; he cannot set himself up against the whole State. He can only resist passively 'to the death'. This Christ did, and so did all the revolutionary elements among his followers. The less revolutionary elements recanted until the storms blew over and this of course strengthened ultimately the forces of reformism in the Church. The Roman exploited class was a slave class divided into households and latifundia and therefore unorganised. Christianity was an attempt to achieve such an organisation on a metropolitan and area basis, or, in the legions (where Christian cells were formed) on a functional basis. But the whole pressure of rebellion was towards decentralisation, and it was perhaps inevitable that Christian revolt should be passive and non-co-operative. Certainly it was correct in not attempting to bolster up or seize the Imperial power, for it was this power which was obsolete. Christianity's rôle was to strengthen the decentralising movements within the Empire by setting up autonomous local communes tied by fraternal understanding. These were the Churches. But the early Christians were not prepared to fight for the existence of these communes, and it was this which brought about the defeat of the whole revolutionary movement.

The most efficient Roman Emperor, Diocletian, attempted to combat revolution with reform. While launching a vigorous counter-revolution or 'persecution', he also introduced a considerable amount of decentralisation in the Empire, dividing it into four autonomous units. Although this move was probably inevitable, it merely hastened the disintegration of the Empire. Its increasing impoverishment was bringing about a rapid devolution.

In remote Britian, however, Constantine had seen the creative rôle of Christianity and its absolute inevitability in

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the advanced disintegration of the Empire. Local autonomy was bound to come. With great shrewdness, he saw that Christianity had also advanced to a stage where it could be relied upon to co-operate with the powers against which it was originally in revolt. Himself of proletarian origin, Constantine understood precisely the rôle Christianity was playing in relation to the masses. Like Hitler in a Germany 'menaced' with Socialism, Constantine, faced with the menace of Christianity, saw how to make this revolutionary feeling the means of bringing him to power, not as a revolutionary leader but within the framework of the existing State. Thus Constantine's legions, like Hitler's Nazis, having been promised the full programme of revolution, swept him to power, after which he found no difficulty in consolidating his position within the Imperial machine and dropping the revolutionary programme.

In order to understand his success, it is necessary to bear in mind the part played by the leaders of social democracy in the period 1890-1936. They found themselves, like the Christian bishops, priests and deacons, as elected officials of organisations which were revolutionary in aim, having as their goal in one case the establishment of socialism and in the other, the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven (primitive communism), but both designed to realise part of their revolutionary aims *now*—the trades unions and parliamentary parties by gaining wage concessions within the framework of capitalism, the Churches by friendly and benefit activities among the poor. The elected officials soon became permanent ones and eventually they found themselves with commanding positions, honours, and vested interests in maintaining on the one hand the existing society and on the other hand the revolutionary organisation which gave them their job. Hence the social democratic leaders in all countries played the same part. They

were prepared to co-operate in all vital matters with the ruling class—the maintenance of law and order, the waging of Imperialist war, the sabotaging of political strikes or demonstrations, the stifling of extra-parliamentary action, and the crushing of revolutionary socialism (Bolshevism). At the same time they kept their organisations alive by the expression of revolutionary sentiments, and by attacking the ruling class on minor issues.

Constantine evidently found that the development of Christianity had produced in the revolutionary movement just such a class of leaders. They were willing to 'go over' to the god-king in return for being given an important place in the administration of the Empire. The administrative class as a whole had no hesitation, in view of the general scepticism of such an epoch, in 'embracing' Christianity. The Church became Imperial and the bulwark of the god-king's power. The completely insincere nature of Constantine's bargain with Christianity is shown by the fact that he himself never became a Christian.

Thus the forces of the Christian revolutionary movement were placed at the service of the counter-revolution. The priests became State officials and the Churches State organs. All the revolutionary content of the Christian programme, the Kingdom of Heaven, the millenium, was shifted entirely into the next world. The love-feast, at which material food was shared in common, became the ideal sacrifice of the Mass in which only a 'token' food was shared out. The communion of goods dwindled to the administration of a poor law by the priests. Christianity became a mystery-religion, full of the neo-Platonism, Mithraism and Isis-cult remnants derived from earlier mystery religions. At the very moment when it buttressed the greed of the upper classes, it started to preach to the lower the virtues of abstinence, fasting, poverty, and self-denial. Such a betrayal



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was of course only possible with a movement which had already been bewildered, and from the start, by the reformism of Jesus's fatal choice:—'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things that are God's,' which seemed at the time such a clever escape from a difficult political situation. This bewilderment was made permanent by the hailing of Jesus's execution as an other-worldly triumph, not a this-worldly set-back. This again had seemed a clever move at the time. Yet, like Socialism in Germany and Italy, Christianity had been defeated by this refusal to place in the forefront the vital question of power.

Of course the step taken by Constantine had been prepared by the development of Roman economy. The leaders of Christianity had already become wealthy and influential persons in the society of their time. Constantine's action therefore only regularised a process which had long been going on below the surface. By incorporating Christianity into the superstructure he stiffened it and enabled the Roman Empire to survive, at least in the East. Christianity itself was of course transformed in the process and became Greek Orthodoxy, an organ of the State with a ritual, a pantheon, and a Hellenistic monotheism which reflected the despotic Imperialism round which it was built.

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The impoverishment of the Roman Empire, increasing the incidence of taxation, had expropriated large numbers of the land-owning class, in spite of the edicts forbidding them to give up their estates. The attempt by the central authority to squeeze still more surplus value from their slaves often resulted in the nominal 'freeing' of slaves, and the creation of serfs. It was in these circumstances that the

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local landowners, as well as the slaves, had welcomed the freedom from centralised responsibility involved in the communism of primitive Christianity. In the finish Roman Imperial economy became an economy of local peasants, serfs, decaying cities and harassed landowners. The revolutionary content of Christianity now appeared as the revolt, not (as originally) of the common people, but of the local ruling class. The Arian heresy and its successors was one form of this: the breaking away of the Western Church was another.

Meanwhile the barbarians penetrated the Empire—partly by importation, to swell the declining population of the Empire, partly by actual conquest. They were sucked in rather than invading it. Their social relations and pastoral conceptions of status were more suited to an economy in which wealth and money were vanishing.

In this disintegration the Church in the West acted as a bulwark of the older civilisation only because she was a bulwark of the older economy. In the worst days of the Roman Empire, when reduction in population became a social virtue, communities of men and women vowed to chastity had assembled in the attempt to form a new communism, now that it was no longer faced by a centralised and powerful government, proved successful, and everywhere the Benedictine monastery sprang up, and became the manor—the model agricultural unit. Meanwhile the secular clergy, the bishop and the priest, had become intimately associated with the economic life of the neighbourhood in a way impossible to the Imperial agent. When the barbarians trickled in, the Imperial tax-gathering bureaucracy fled, but the priests and bishops, drawing and consuming their tribute locally, stayed on. Thus the invaders found themselves confronted by a homogeneity of organisation in the regions they penetrated, which was intimately

associated with the very life of the land. To disrupt this would be to disrupt life itself, for economic production would cease. At the same time the disappearance of the Imperial agents, the number of absentee local landowners, and the decentralising tendency of the Western Church, made it possible for the land to be parcelled between barbarians and Church without disaster. Thus Christendom stood for these barbarians as something universal and ordered and civilised—a Law given in the nature of things—for the whole superior economy they penetrated and took over revolved round it. They were therefore ‘converted’, and not only were they themselves changed but they also changed Christianity and increased the decentralising trend of the Church by giving Christianity a ‘barbarian’ form. Feudal social relations thus came into being and, just as barbarians adopted the Church, the Church adopted feudal forms of land tenure.

The Western Church found itself faced with the complete break-up of its European organisation as the result of feudal autonomy. The only remedy was celibacy, and this already existed in embryo in the form of monastic chastity, itself a product of the dwindling of the Roman Empire’s wealth and the hallmark of a failing agricultural economy. By making its officials celibate, the Church avoided the dynastic trends of other Imperial officials, who had made hereditary what was originally a delegated power. Celibacy preserved the centralised control of the Church without the need for Imperial stratagems such as the continual shifting of officials. A bishop could be safely allowed to become part and parcel of the life of his neighbourhood, without the danger of his founding a dynasty. This celibacy in itself brought about a separation between priestly and secular branches of the ruling class unknown to any previous civilisations. Without it, undoubtedly, the Western Church would have

disintegrated and disappeared into a number of local churches.

Thus Christendom emerged in Western Europe as the one universal idea because it was the one universal organisation. Its courts, its law, its universal provision of salvation, justice and learning, and its alms-giving activities, were but the reflection of its standardising and organising rôle in the economy of Western Europe. There was a coming and going of scholars and merchandise and commodities, there was exchange of learning, a homogeneity of social relations, a standardisation of agriculture and viticulture in Western Europe, precisely because bishop and monastery provided an interweaving substratum of organised agriculture and trade, a higher level of technical production, which prevented the Dark Ages from being really dark, from ever relapsing into the anarchy of unorganised units. The clerical class was the clerkly class, charged with the keeping of accounts, of farm records, and all the administrative duties essential to an organised agriculture. This power in society, transcending local and territorial boundaries, was expressed in the hierarchy of heaven, with its centralised Divine administration, its God, and the god-king on earth—the Pope of Rome, and his various sacred representatives, bishops, priests, and monks. It was expressed in the towns, made possible by the organisation of *Christian* economy, and therefore rightly centred round the cathedral, the brilliant expression of feudal life.

But the 'lay' landlords, with their unfeudalised, dynastic basis, found themselves, as they grew in intelligence and organisation, eventually in sharp conflict with a celibate, centralised, ecclesiastical organisation. The growing feudal concentration expressed itself not only as a steady transformation of social relations, but as a violent antagonism between the feudal lords themselves, between the various

summits of the lay feudal pyramids—the monarchies, and between these and the Church, and the growing bourgeois class in the towns; while exploited by them all was the mass of peasants, descendants of the serfs and slaves of Imperial Rome. Feudal landlordism was in any case doomed: ultimately it would succumb to a centralised monarchy which would itself be only a stage in the emergence of the bourgeois class created in the rising medieval towns. In different countries the antagonism took different forms. Where the monarchy and the bourgeois class joined against a weakened feudalism, assisted by the oppressed peasantry, a breach was made in all the fixed privileges of feudalism. A Reformation, the first step in the bourgeois Revolution, then took place.

This Reformation voiced the demands of bourgeois production in the clearest way. Salvation was no longer the monopoly of the feudal state organisation, but of the individual freely electing for it. The Church was not a body of faithful bound by overtly symbolised social relations (prayers for the dead, Purgatory, the Community of the Saints) but a mere collection of individuals who sank or swam separately according to the gr<sup>ace</sup> of God.

God now became arbitrary and dreadful. Corresponding to a society where the individual appears to be naked, dependent entirely on his own efforts in the face of nature, and where all social relations such as alms-giving, craft agreements and price regulations were abandoned as fetters on development, Calvinism emerged. In this form of religion God's will seemed immovable by the prayer of society and confronted only the bare individual. Like an outside Fate, it damned or saved him arbitrarily, not in spite of but through his efforts. Thus Protestantism accurately expressed the true character of the bourgeois society in which the individual is most subject to external 'accident', most

helpless and unfree in the face of Fate, precisely because it is the society in which nominally the individual is most free and most able to develop his inner will.

Many 'heresies', such as that of the Albigenses, had before this expressed the revolt of the exploited classes against the feudal landlords. Only a revolt led by the bourgeoisie and based on the large towns, could be successful. Bourgeois and peasants and monarch were able for a time to make common cause because their enemies were at that stage the same—the big feudal lords.

Catholicism and Calvinism, one representing the feudal class, the other the bourgeois class, struggle and achieve various compromises: the compromise of the English Church (which is battered first by the Puritan Revolution and then by the Industrial, Methodist and non-conformist Revolution, both representing developing petty bourgeois interests); the compromise of the Gallican Church (with a greater feudal mixture, which is shattered by the French Revolution); of the various German Churches; of the Spanish Church (in which the Crown ends by being identified again with the feudal, land-owning *grandees*); and of the Netherlands. In all cases the bourgeois is placed in the same anomalous position, in that the real fulfilment of his creed—complete absence of social restraints—would lead either to anarchy or communism. It would lead in both cases to the abolition of the one social restraint by which he lives—private property. At a certain stage of the Revolution he is therefore forced to hold it back and support a counter-revolution in order to prevent the peasantry (as Luther in Germany), or the petty bourgeoisie (as in the Restoration of Charles II), or the proletariat (as the Thermidorians in France) from throwing off their chains. He is forced to go back on his nominal programme, and maintain the coercive, centralised State and the authoritarian Church in order to

maintain the basis of his class. This results in all the illogical and bastard varieties of reformist Christianity which sprang into being with every stage of the bourgeois revolution. Catholicism alone remains 'pure', as the expression of the land-owning and primarily peasant-exploiting ruling classes, in Spain, Italy, South America and France, or, alternatively, as the religion of those exploited classes, even under bourgeois rule, who are exploited as peasants. To such, Catholicism, with its inverted world of rich dreams to make up for the real misery of the peasant's world, is the necessary religion and, as in Ireland, will appear to express their interests as against a bourgeois imperialist class. Catholicism is the religion of the special misery of the peasant and also of the rule of the landowners, just as Protestantism is the religion of the misery of the 'free' labourer and also of the rule of the bourgeois. The glories and richly populated heaven of the Catholic reflect the meaner, barer world of the peasant, just as the sterner heaven of the Protestant symbolises the less degraded existence of the exploited proletariat.

The 'logical' end of the bourgeois religion was Deism. The bourgeois class was a class which denied social relations and, in doing so, necessarily denied all the symbolisations of social relations in religion. Hence the Reformation demanded the sweeping away of Purgatory, of the saints, of all rites and ceremonies. Only the Spirit, indwelling in man, was left in Puritanism. This Spirit itself was simply the symbol of Will as the bourgeois believes it to be—spontaneous, free, and undetermined.

Religion, however, also symbolised man's relations to Nature through society. In so far as the social forces of society—symbolised by God—are not all powerful, but meet with checks and must obey 'natural' laws, there seems something behind God, something greater than man's

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idealisation of human will, and this more powerful system is regarded as Fate, or God's own edict which he will only occasionally disobey by working miracles.

Now this order in nature is unfolded to view by man's very interpenetration with nature. Hence the superior technical efficiency of bourgeois economy, beginning with Galileo and da Vinci, generated an increasingly over-riding conception of this Fate or of God's unchangeable Will which, as more and more was learned about it, seemed more and more impersonal, empty, and mechanical. Via Descartes, Newton, Hobbes and the Encyclopædists, this Fate became a transparent Deism which was almost indistinguishable from mechanical materialism, and became completely atheistic at the most revolutionary period of bourgeois struggle.

This itself was an expression of the bourgeois revolutionary movement. For it the world is automatic and mechanical—the problem of life is not in society but in the environment. All social restraints must therefore be removed to permit the maximum utilisation, investigation and exploitation of the environment, i.e., of property. This attitude to God and Nature became a charter of bourgeois revolution.

Such a movement inevitably meant that the propertyless exploited class, the proletariat, whose help was always demanded by the bourgeois in their revolutions, wanted to go still further, and abolish the social restraint of property which, by holding them in bondage, by arbitrarily and non-scientifically carving up the environment, denied the bourgeoisie's own slogan: 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.'

In practice therefore the bourgeoisie drew back before Deism and from 1793 to 1936 there was a series of retreating movements resulting in the maintenance of some kind of Church or official church theology which was arbitrary and



coercive, just as the bourgeois State in spite of its democratic slogans was arbitrary and coercive—because the restraint of property could only be maintained arbitrarily and coercively. It became generally accepted that some religious instruction was ‘good’ for the people. Thus, although already riddled with bourgeois criticism, religion was officially maintained by the bourgeois class, even though they themselves only partially or prevaricatingly believed in it.

This was accompanied later by a similar retreat in science. The recognition of the determined nature of the environment should have resulted in a recognition of the true nature of that determinism in society as a whole. This would have meant the destruction of the fundamental bourgeois position: that unsocialised bourgeois property is justified because the bourgeois will is free in itself, the sole active centre in society. Acceptance of this determinism would have led, not only to the ‘naturalisation’ of humanity but also to the ‘humanisation’ of nature, which in the bourgeois scheme is mechanical, empty of human values and Newtonian. Instead of accepting this interpenetration, which would have involved the rejection of the bourgeois illusion, bourgeois theory swung over to the projection of the bourgeois human (not the scientific human) into nature. This led, as we show more fully in the essay, *Reality*, to absolute Idealism, which marked the final stage of coercive bourgeoisdom—the arbitrary Prussian State, with its negation of bourgeois theories of freedom; a State which was yet maintained by the imperative needs of bourgeois private property. In such a State a Professor could be dismissed after writing a simple book on ethics, by a decision of the Prussian Minister of Education which stated: ‘that it was not a single passage which had given offence but the whole Scheme, and that a philosophy which did not deduce everything from the

Absolute could not be considered to be a philosophy at all.' The Absolute thus revealed itself in the rôle it was to play thereafter—the absolute demand that the State should protect private property and express the interests of the ruling class, even if it means war, economic disaster, and starvation, a demand that makes the guardian of private property seem to tower above society as the totalitarian State.

Thus the final disintegration of bourgeois culture is an elaborate phenomenon. The Will of God or Fate has, by the increasing technical achievement of the bourgeois, become causality, but only as applied to non-living matter, for the bourgeois cannot admit himself to be a determined individual—to do so would be to uncover the determining relations which are all social relations. The consciousness of these determining relations is simply Marxism, the world view of the revolutionary proletariat. Thus the bourgeois reserves for himself an area of spontaneity or non-causality in all values in which the human mind is concerned, and since there is no determinism there, they are all arbitrary and might be anything. This is expressed in some such formula as 'Science leaves man free to believe what he will.' 'Science applies to a different sphere from that of religion.'

Precisely because the development of bourgeois culture is the development of individualistic anarchy, religion has ceased to-day to be the expression of a coherent economy and becomes mere individualism. For this reason religion has become something widely abstracted from the concrete existence of men—at the opposite pole from the indwelling magic of the primitive, permeating all social life. The disintegration of bourgeois culture is marked by the appearance of thousands of different religions, systems of belief and idealistic philosophies—theosophy, spiritualism, Oxford Groupism, psycho-analysis (in its mystical form), Anthro-

posophy, and also all the varieties of belief that have sprung up within the nominal framework of one religion such as English Protestantism. These religions are all alike in that on the one hand, by their exaltation of the freedom and spontaneity of the spirit, they give a wish-fulfilment consolation to the hard-pressed human creature helpless as never before in the blind grip of an anarchic society; and, on the other hand, by their detachment of human values from material, by their idealism, by their denial of science and determination in all important spheres, they help to maintain things as they are, and struggle against any attempt of man to acknowledge and control the material forces of society. Thus the very disintegration of religion into all forms of mysticism and idealism, while it reflects the demoralisation of the society that produces this, by no means brings about an automatic collapse into rationality. On the contrary, this very disintegration and mysticism, this haze of bewilderment and cross-purposes, serves as a conservative force and a barricade of counter-revolution. To the counter-revolution every second gained is precious, however it is gained. All obstructions are aids and all haze or darkness valuable. The struggle against the real material misery of the world that produces this ideological haze must be an active struggle not merely to shatter existing society but to seize its forms and transform them; not merely to deny existing bourgeois ideology but to fuse its shattered fragments and use their content for a further ideological advance. It is not a question of posing religion against atheism; it is a question of turning an anarchic, neurotic society into an organised and sane one. This is a revolutionary task.

Beneath the ideological haze is an iron core, the maintenance by force of outworn social relations, the maintenance of bourgeois private property. This was only secured

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by the creation of the coercive State, and, as the revolt against capitalism grows stronger, so the State emerges as more absolute, coercive, and irrational. It becomes the Moloch to which decency, humanity, even religion itself must be sacrificed, not for any reason given but as an Absolute Imperative behind which we must not look, for if we look behind it we shall find the simple claim to profit. It is just this Absolute which symbolises the bourgeois right to property which now—no longer based on logic, reason or convenience—becomes a new God, a God of Force and Hate.

This new religion of bourgeois decadence is Imperialism, the patriotism of the monopoly stage of capitalism. The State comes first, all must be sacrificed to the interests of the nation, including the lives of other nations and the health and happiness of one's own people. Because the bourgeois property interests are interests now sharply opposed to those of the people as a whole, these interests and this State now separate themselves from the people and appear as Divine and Sacred entities whom to deny or attack is wicked, a blasphemy beyond the blasphemy of religion. Religions dating from early periods of capitalist developments, before the coming of monopoly, find their symbolisations to be in conflict with the Moloch, and thus we find ranged against the State, and its absolute claim to enforce the naked property right of the bourgeois, large strata of the people still professing the old bourgeois religions, as well as the class-conscious proletariat. This Moloch patriotism, born during the jingo period of British Imperialism and in the Prussian State, reached a new height during the 1914-18 War, and has received its final expression in Fascism. Against Fascism therefore appears a United Front of the proletariat supported by many Christians—the past and the future both denying the outrageous present. In that struggle ideology

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is transformed and religion—in the actual struggle shedding its illusions one by one—finds its fantastic reality sucked into material reality, and its inverted world stood on its feet. It emerges as the self-feeling of a man who has found himself in society—as the consciousness of a classless society.

The passage from which sentences are quoted on pp. 17-19 is given in full below.

‘The man who has found in the fantastic reality of heaven, where he sought a supernatural being, no more than his own reflection, will no longer be satisfied to find only the semblance of himself, only the unhuman, where he seeks, and must seek, his true reality.

‘The basis of irreligious criticism is: Man makes religion, religion does not make man. And, in truth, religion is consciousness of self and the self-feeling of a man who has not yet found himself or has lost himself again. Also, man is not an abstract being existing outside the world. Man—that is, the world of men, the State, society. This State, this society, produces religion—an inverted consciousness of the world—because the world itself is an inverted world. Of *this* world religion is the general theory, its encyclopædic compendium, its logic in popular thought, its spiritual *point d’honneur*, its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn completion, its universal ground for truth and justification. It is the imaginary realisation of the human essence, necessary because the human essence has no true reality. The struggle against religion is therefore, indirectly, the struggle against that world whose spiritual aroma is religion.

‘Religious misery is at once the expression of real misery and a protest against that real misery. Religion is the sigh of the hard-pressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, the spirit of unspiritual conditions. It is the opium of the people.

‘The removal of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness. The demand that they should give up illusions about their real conditions

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is the demand that they should give up the conditions which make illusion necessary. Criticism of religion is therefore at heart a criticism of the vale of misery for which religion is the promised vision.

'Criticism has torn away the imaginary flowers with which his chains were decked, not in order that man should wear his chains without the comfort of illusions, but that he may throw off the chains and pluck the living flowers. Criticism of religion disillusions man so that he may think, act and shape his reality as one who is disillusioned and come to full understanding, so that he may move on his own axis and thus be his own sun. Religion is but the false sun which revolves around him while he is not yet fully aware.

'Thus it is the *function of history*, after the *other-worldly truth* has collapsed, to establish *this world's truth*. Then, it is the *function of philosophy*, in the service of history, having destroyed the supernatural semblance of man's self-alienation, to go on and destroy the secular form of this self-alienation. Criticism of heaven thus turns into criticism of the world, *criticism of religion* into *criticism of law*, and *criticism of theology* into *criticism of politics*.\*

\* Karl Marx: *Introduction to a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*.

## II

# BEAUTY

### *A Study in Bourgeois Æsthetics*

WHAT is beauty? Is it a subject for discussion at all? Can it be defined in such a way as to provide a foundation for æsthetics? Is it a product of art? Or of nature?

To define: to limit the boundaries, to give an outline to the defined thing. Beauty, then, is defined by all that is not-beauty. This not-beauty circumscribes, limits, and defines beauty. But beauty is not opposed by not-beauty; it is opposed by ugliness. Yet the recognition of ugliness itself involves an æsthetic 'faculty', and sensibilities responding both to beauty and ugliness; and it is not possible to say where one begins and the other ends. Ugliness itself is an æsthetic value: the villain, the gargoyle, the grotesque, the Caliban, the snake-headed Furies, the triumph of Time's decaying hand, all these qualities interpenetrate with beauty, and help to generate and feed it. All live in the same world. Nowhere can we draw a distinct line and say, on this side lives the beautiful, and on that the ugly. All man's experience, all the rich complexity of his sculpted, painted, written art forms, all the elaborate multiform crowd of living animals and varied scenery, deny such a simple dichotomy. All form one world even if it contains opposites, and therefore the generating forces must lie at a lower level. Beauty and ugliness, the noble and the petty, the sublime and the ridiculous, all these opposite terms, *when used in an æsthetic*

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way, involve each other, and must be determined by other, different qualities, from which they spring.

We do not respond to all beautiful things in precisely the same way. The peculiar qualities of each thing colour the emotion we feel with an individual unique shade. If it were not so, the one beautiful thing would suffice; the one vase, painting, mountain would always be the sufficient stimulus to our emotion. This is not so. Yet of course there must be a likeness in all our responses for us to group them as one, as *æsthetic*.

Still more striking is the change in the responses to the beautiful from age to age. No age is satisfied wholly with the beautiful things of its forefathers, but produces other things, to the measure of its desires, quite clearly different from those beautiful traditions it inherits. This new vision does not exclude the old, however. The old still seems beautiful, but now its qualities are seen through a kind of mist or aerial perspective of intervening time, changing and toning its hues. The old beauty has been gathered up in the new. And that age which is least able to rest content with the beautiful things of the past, that creates things beautiful to its eyes most different, most revolutionary and most insurgent, is precisely that age which seems to us most in possession of beauty. We value the revolutionary, dissatisfied art works of the Renaissance, and see nothing in those of the Hellenising classicists or tired formalists who mechanically repeat the beautiful things of times gone by.

Man remains throughout this period much the same, but the changing pageant of his art, his poetry, and his buildings proclaims that at no stage does his idea of beauty remain constant, but continually demands expansion and rejection. All contents of the habitable world, of the known cosmos even, come to share in this strange irradiation. The rich



Americas, the glassy depths of the 'deep abyss', the spiral nebulae, new birds and insects, jungles and swamps, the silent Poles and the breathless Equator, acquire for man's eyes with each generation a novel æsthetic quality and become things of a nature undreamt of before this time.

Remembering this, we start to define Beauty. The man looks at an object and calls it beautiful. This is a relationship repeatable by this one man with perhaps thousands of objects. What does it involve—what, in this subject-object relation, is the Beauty?

It must be, not in one relation but in all relations of man to object where man says: 'This is Beautiful'. It must be, therefore, something common to all beautiful objects and to all men finding an object beautiful.

The simplest answer is to say that the man is common to all objects, and therefore beauty is 'in' the man. Beauty is a state of the man. To the bourgeois æsthete this very simple solution of the problem seems so obvious that he has no patience with anyone who can think anything else. This is the solution advanced by I. A. Richards and C. K. Ogden:

'Beauty is attributed to objects which produce coenæsthesia.'\*

The common term linking these relations wherein the man says 'This is beautiful' is therefore his 'coenæsthesia'. Here is a common term of the kind we sought for when we sought for something similar in all relations of men finding objects beautiful. Here then is a definition for beauty. Beauty is coenæsthesia.

Coenæsthesia is a wide term, and really includes the totality of proprioceptive impressions as far as they give rise to affects. Most neurologists picture the process as one in which interoceptive stimuli—particularly visceral stimuli—

\* *The Meaning of Meaning*, by I. A. Richards & C. K. Ogden.

give rise, *via* thalamic activity, to colorations of the conscious field known as feelings. Now it is quite plain that although the æsthetic emotions are coenæsthetic in this sense simply because they are affective, all coenæsthetic sensations are not sensations of the beautiful. That would be to say that all feelings of pleasure or unpleasure are feelings of the beautiful. Consequently the definition of Richards and Ogden is inadequate. A pork chop, well done, may arouse strong feelings of coenæsthesia, but it is not beautiful—or hideous. As an æsthetic object, it is neutral.

Why do the authors then arrive at this definition? It is in fact a typically bourgeois definition; beauty is a state of the bourgeois. This is not very different from many other bourgeois propositions springing out of the decay of bourgeois philosophy after Hegel, shown by the rise of positivism. In the same way Truth becomes an *economical* method for the bourgeois of describing phenomena. Causality becomes the way it *suits* the bourgeois to think of phenomena. And so on. It is the product of a 'tired' philosophy.

The definition of beauty as coenæsthesia is the ultimate product of mechanical materialism, of a philosophy that defines the environment as 'all that is not the bourgeois', while the Bourgeois stands outside it free and separate. The world thus becomes divested of all values arising from the relation of bourgeois to environment, for all such values, since they contain the bourgeois, are abstracted from the environment, for otherwise they would tie him to it. Such a non-valued environment ultimately contains nothing knowable and contains therefore nothing at all, but by the time this is discovered bourgeois culture is in such an advanced stage of disintegration that it seems immaterial whether the world is a real, coloured, qualified world or a ghostly ballet of equations.

- (i) If on the one hand the environment is robbed of all

values in which it shares, the bourgeois is presented with all such values. They are his. Beauty is *in him*. But it is soon found that this by no means aggrandises such values.

For what is the bourgeois, according to the mechanical materialist? A body, a group of electrons, a collection of blood, bones, and neurones, subject to physiological laws, conditioned reflexes, and 'instincts'. Beauty and all similar values thus become physiological activity. Having dissolved the environment into moving molecules, atoms, ultimately into tensors and moved all values into the bourgeois, this type of bourgeois philosopher now starts to operate on the bourgeois himself. He also is the environment to other bourgeois; he also is matter. Therefore all the accumulation of values stripped from the environment and concentrated in him can now themselves quickly be shown to be nothing but physiological functions, biochemical and electronic phenomena—mere tensors.

This is the bourgeois nightmare of a predetermined Universe which includes the bourgeois, from which he shuddered away into absolute idealism.

(ii) If we start from the other end, with the mind as primary, all qualities which partake of the environment are stripped from mind. Applied to relations of the beautiful, this involves that the singularities of the beautiful objects, due to the way in which they differ among themselves, are to be abstracted from these relations in order to discover the essentially beautiful. The liquid eyes of the deer, the massive solidity of the mountain, the fatness of Falstaff, the coldness of an iceberg, are qualities not common to mind but peculiar to the objects on which mind rests. They must all be stripped away and finally, by removing all environmental individualities from beauty as it inheres in beautiful relations, we are left with absolute Beauty, the Idea or con-

cept of Beauty, which is homogeneous and bare of individualities, and is therefore completely mental.

But the objects of beauty vary from generation to generation of men, and appear to have existed before men exist. There is therefore a Beauty which is independent of the brain. Thus we get the absolute Idea of Beauty existing apart from the brains of men. This is that 'Beauty' of which æstheticians talk; meaning nothing but an Idea, something colourless, a kind of vague white-robed bare-footed personification going about the world. Such an idea is parasitic, because it sucks an emotive colouring from all beautiful objects, and yet has denuded those objects of just that in them which was the source of our delight—their self-hood and individuality. It is death to Art, because in the artist's flair for the difference, for the newness, for the intrinsic and peerless individuality of the beautiful object, lies his power to make new beauty. It is equally deadening to the lover of beauty, for he loves beautiful *objects*—the daffodil, the Cézanne—for *themselves*, not because in them is a manifestation of an Idea of the Beautiful. Thus, when the extremes of bourgeois idealism and bourgeois mechanical materialism in the realm of Value are reached, there is not so much difference after all—to both Beauty dissolves and becomes something homogeneous, empty, dead—coenæsthesia or the Absolute Idea.

\* \* \* \*

It is true of course that coenæsthesia enters into the beautiful relation, just as a neuronc wave of potential difference enters into the perceptual relation. How much is there to this side of the story?

Let us pick out at random a few generalised qualities and values:

Heat,	Cold,	Glory,	Happiness,
Pleasure,	Beauty,	Fear,	Pain.

## BEAUTY

All these may be regarded as affective: Man feels happy, pleased, afraid, feels pain, fear, that a thing is hot, that a thing is beautiful. But of course, in the way these feelings arise, each expresses a relation of the man to his environmental relation. *Something* makes man happy, he finds *something* to be pleasant. Yet there is plainly a difference in man's use of these concepts. Happiness, fear, pain and heat are all the accompaniment of nervous disturbances, are all in possession of a common physiological term. We locate happiness *in ourselves*, and this we do also with fear and pain, and yet we locate heat and beauty *out there*, in the object.

We locate it as the outcome of our experience. Take the concept of happiness. Experience shows us that certain objects in certain cases are associated with happiness, in the other cases with not-happiness. We find that movement away from those objects to others does not necessarily mean the removal of unhappiness. We find that happiness has a persistent quality through a large number of different 'I' environmental situations. Happiness is common to these situations. So is the 'I'. The environment is not common, but changes in these situations; so we locate happiness in the 'I'. A happy person is therefore to us a person who has *in him* happiness.

But fear, or joy, while showing a certain congruity in changing environmental situations, also show a certain incongruity. We may indeed find fear and joy persisting in certain changes, but we may find a given situation, particularly with fear, forcibly and abruptly changing the stability of the ego, from happiness or boredom to fear. Therefore we conceive fear and joy, as *a* fear and *a* joy, separate and impersonal, situated neither in the environment nor ourselves, but abruptly breaking in on both.

A pain we locate in ourselves but yet as something alien

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to us which has gained a seat in us. This concept is necessitated by our experience (a) that we act immediately by withdrawing our bodies from the environment (therefore pain is alien, imposed on us by the environment), (b) that often pain cannot be so diminished but is still, after such actions, present in our bodies, as for example a toothache, or the pain of a wound after the blow. (Therefore pain is inside us.)

Heat and cold we locate entirely in objects because experience has shown us that movements of our body always remove us from the source of heat or cold. It is therefore not in ourselves, but the environment. In the sum of ego-environment relations, *happiness* vanished while the environment *remained* but *heat* vanished when the environment *changed*. Hence, just as happiness is located in the ego, heat is located in the environment.

Finally beauty, like heat, and unlike pain, fear, joy, pleasure or happiness is located entirely in the environment. The object is beautiful; we ourselves do not feel beautiful when we see a beautiful object.

In other words, it is man's experience that beauty is an objective quality—not wholly objective, because it is a relation between subject and object—but objective in the way that heat is. Like heat, beauty appears or disappears in man's conscious field according as he moves towards or from the beautiful object in his environment, the object itself remaining unchanged during this process. That is what men have felt when they called Beauty timeless, eternal, Divine. But we have already seen that to accept this, to separate the lover of beauty from beautiful objects, is to make Beauty either a colourless Idea or a physiological disturbance.

We find men agree about what is hot and what is cold in all ages. Moreover we can correlate differences of heat with

differences of molecular movement and with the temperature of man's blood, above which temperature all seems 'hot' and below which all seems 'cold'. By inference, we hold that these molecular movements with which heat is identified were the same in character long before man existed. This gives heat, in all its degrees, an objective existence independent of man. It is now described or compared with other qualities (motion), more or less independently of the sensory nerves.

But we do not find men agreeing about what is beautiful in all ages. We find on the contrary that in each age:

(a) Men pick out different objects as beautiful, or pick out different aspects or details of objects already recognised as beautiful, for praise.

(b) Men not only pick out different objects as beautiful (beauty in nature) but make different beautiful objects (beauty in art) from age to age.

(c) Usually, however, the objects that earlier generations found or made beautiful, are accepted by later generations as beautiful, and the rôle of the later generation is that of either adding to them by enriching our perception of them, or subtly modifying our appreciation of their qualities.

We cannot find any non-æsthetic qualities in terms of which beauty can be exactly described independently of man, although we can find non-thermal qualities in terms of which heat can be exactly described. Thus we cannot infer back to describe the beauty of the world before man came into existence; we can only suppose that, 'if man could see such a world, he would find it beautiful'. But, to do so, we must imagine the observer already there; ourselves looking at such a world; we cannot imagine the world as a ballet of impersonal equations with the beauty expressed by these equations, as they express the heat of molecular movement.

How are we to reconcile the fact that we regard beauty,

unlike happiness, as a property of the environment, with our failure to produce comparative environmental qualities, as we can in the case of heat, which would suffice to determine it independently of man? We could only reconcile it if there were a triadity in the subject-object relation of man to beautiful object; if in addition to naked subject and naked environment, we had a third mediating term, something which remained unchanged while the subject changed and so could stand to it as environment and account for our projection of Beauty outside ourselves, and yet which changed while the bare environment remained unchanged, which would account for the historic change in what particular objects are found to be lovely or made beautiful.

We have actually such a third term; we have already referred to it; it is men as opposed to man—society. The *man* as born, as innate, uneducated and 'wild', changes little in the course of history, but of course he does not span all human history; only *men-in-society* does that. So in commenting on the change in man's estimation of beauty from age to age, we have already in fact admitted society as the cause of change in beauty, of the coming into being of new beauty. In commenting on the constancy of the environment throughout, we have in fact admitted that the objective environment in which beauty is situated is social rather than natural. If it were the unchanging environment in which beauty was situated, how could it change? If man, substantially unchanging in his innate make-up, faced the unchanging earth and stars without material mediation, how could an ever-changing beauty be generated? But man sees nature through social spectacles. 'Spectacles' is a partly incorrect analogy, for man is a part of society, and nature is a part of society. Society is a genuine middle term. To an individual man society stands as environment, and is included with the sun, earth and air. To nature, however, society stands as an



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active human force. The antimonies of beauty as a value can therefore only be resolved by regarding it as a social product, something secreted in the process of society. In the process of society, all nature enters. Man measures himself against infinite space, and takes his time from the sun. He feels the hot breath of the desert in his cities, and he goes out alone or in bands to establish himself in the jungles. He moves on the face of the lonely sea in man-made ships. The threads of social process penetrate, under the hands of Einstein and Amundsen, Freud and Rutherford, Kepler and Magellan, into remoter and remoter cracks of reality. The labouring masses of society root deep in the face of the earth. The farmer sowing the fruitful prairies, the lone hunter in untamed woods, and the sailor on the 'wine-dark' sea are all parts of the social process. As such, the social process generates everywhere beauty, not as a universal but as a specific social product, just as it generates science, politics, or religion.

We referred to the possibility of expressing heat in terms of other, non-sensory, qualities, so that heat had an objective metrical scale, correlated to but independent of man's experience. If it were possible completely so to describe heat, we should be discovering a self-contained, self-determined world. The complete goal is impossible. The completely non-human self-determined world of physics does not exist. There is something in heat as felt which can only be expressed in terms of the observer. But none the less such feeling, in its degree and appearance, can be completely *determined* by other qualities. Bourgeois philosophy attempts to close one world or the other, to make heat objective or mental. Dialectical materialists refuse to do this. Heat is determined by objective qualities but its appearance contains a newness, something peculiar to it as an event.

This is equally true of beauty. Beauty is determined by other non-æsthetic qualities, which account for its appearance and disappearance, its change and development. These qualities are not, as in the case of heat, kinetic, but sociological, they arise from the interaction of systems of men with the environment, in the course of labour processes. Such sociological qualities are not æsthetic: there is a distinct realm of æsthetics. Beauty can only be known, felt or described in the experience, and the experience is real, it is not a chance iridescence on the surface of atomic clouds, but a real intense property of the Universe. A man who had never felt heat would never be able to imagine it from a study of the kinetic theory of heat, however familiar he was with motion. A man who had never seen beautiful things would never know beauty, however complete his sociological data. Beauty is social. It is objective because it lives apart from me, in society. The smile of a Polycletan Hermes has qualities, not only in me, but in the Hellas which produced it, and all that has happened since and before to man. It is not, however, merely resident in society considered as a group of men. It stretches into all parts of the Universe because society, as active subject, is related to all other reality as object.

Happiness is not a social product, any more than a man is a social product. It is true that happiness arises out of the relation of me to my environment; my experience generates it. But it is like my flesh, instinctive and unsophisticated. It is like sorrow, anger and love, a quality which is as yet untransformed by society and is born the same in each man. It is genotypical. I, as individual subject, generate it in relation to the environment, as object. It is not independent of the environment, any more than my body is in its health. But happiness is not a social product any more than illness, which is produced by the environment, is a social product.

We need not suppose it will always be so. A day may come when man, become increasingly conscious of himself, may be able to make happy things, a happy environment, as he makes a beautiful thing. Happiness will then seem to him like beauty, not in himself but in his environment. He will be the creator, not the slave, of happiness and sorrow, as he is now the creator of beauty and ugliness. Then perhaps happiness will seem higher than beauty, or perhaps it will seem as if beauty, by a simple expansion, has taken up happiness within itself, and it is still beauty, but a larger, more universal beauty which we serve, a happiness which we now consciously create and actually see.

Beauty is not alone in playing a dual rôle as object to the individual and subject to the environment. Morality and goodness are the same; they are conceived of as greater than man and outside him, and yet change with society and are not expressible except in sociological terms. God as he appears in all myths, religions and metaphysics, is such a value. Just as Beauty, imagined as a real indwelling goddess, ceased to exist at a certain stage in social development, and yet beauty the objective value persisted, so God, conceived as a person, to-day ceases to exist, and yet morality and goodness, as objective values outside the individual, persist. Both are social products. Truth is another such value. We cannot conceive truth apart from a true statement—something human, and yet we know that truth is not just what I, the individual, think to be true. Truth is a social product; it is a particular relation of the individual, *via* society, to the rest of the Universe.

But truth, goodness, and beauty are not 'just' social products. Their specific social rôles, in which man as individual, men as society, nature as environment and reality as including individual and society and environment, all figure, differ

among themselves and generate their peculiar quality. What is this peculiar quality in the case of beauty? Beauty tells us something, not as a statement tells us something, but as a glance tells us something. It is the apprehension of a genuine quality. A beautiful thing has a significant content, just as a true statement has. But it is not the same significance. What is this difference between true statements and beautiful things?

In the course of the contact of the individual with reality, he experiences various emotions. These emotions, or affects, are new qualities. Instinct is what we call a simple repetition of hereditary habits, the mechanical reappearance of the old. Such simple responses to external or internal stimuli change from age to age, but, in relation to the rapid tempo of social life, there is a consistency about them which leads us to separate them as hypothetical entities, the instincts. Situations which, while evoking instinctual responses, do not permit their emergence unchanged, but cause a suspension or interruption of the pattern, produce affects or emotions. The result of such a situation is the transforming, or conditioning (Pavlov), repression or sublimation (Freud) of the response. Thus the affects or emotions are the sign at once of an instinctive response and of its change in a certain *situation* or subject-object pattern.

The instincts as mechanical responses are unconscious. It is consciousness itself—a particular group of innervations and their relation to reality—which calls them ‘unconscious’. What it means by this term is: ‘not included with us’. But all innervations, being innervations of one nervous system, are related. Thus even the unconscious group, those innervations ‘not included with us’, are in indirect connexion with the conscious group. In so far as they leave mnemonic traces, unconscious innervations can be known by consciousness. The nature of this ‘unconscious’ excluded group is

such that they leave crude mnemic traces but, once left, these traces are enduring. Unconscious 'memories' are simple, poor, and permanent; conscious memories are subtle, rich, and fluid.

Affects are conscious. A feeling is felt. But the affects, the emotions, emerge as a specific relation between a situation and an innate response. The relation between situation and response generates these emotions. Consciousness is a relation of two unconscious terms, body and environment.

The organism encounters situations through its exteroceptive neurones, through sight, hearing, touch, and smell, of which in man sight and hearing are dominant. The organism has responses because of innate potentialities buried in it, in its chromosomes, in its sympathetic and parasympathetic systems, in its visceral innervations. Of course there is no gulf between situation receptors and response-effectors. The eye itself has innate responses; and stimuli arise inside the organism. A stomach ache is a situation. But the *situation* is sensory, is *external*; the *response* is somatic, is *interior*.

An emotion which expresses a particular new relation between a situation and a response therefore has both a sensory component and a somatic component. It is not a mixture, it is a quality—a relation of two terms. The situation appears as the form: the present situation as a percept, sound heard, odour smelt or tactile sensation; the past situation as a memory. The response appears as the feeling content, as the fear, desire, or boredom associated with the presentation. Both are intimately mingled. In thought the situation appears as the memory-image, thought, dream and so forth, and the response as the feeling tone, or affective colouring of the thought. In reflection, affective tone and percept are more closely entwined, for whereas the organism

is the same, there is no real situation 'outside-now'. The affect has almost sucked up into itself the sensory presentation; hence the possibility of imageless thought.

Thus all consciousness may be regarded as groups of entities which may be divided into feelings, the *content*; and situations being met or remembered, the *form*. Feelings are common to all contents, but the form is different for present and for past situations. The form of the one is a percept; of the second, a memory or thought. But the affect differs subtly according to whether the form is a memory or a percept.

A thing may be unconsciously perceived if it evokes no new response. It is habitual, always there; we do not notice it.

The field of consciousness therefore represents the ingression of the new into the organism-situation relation. The affective basis is the organismal basis and the thought or perceptual form is the situation form. But they completely interpenetrate; they are not separable. They determine each other. Each change in consciousness involves a change in the environment. Of course, for each component of consciousness, the change may be chiefly organismal or chiefly environmental. This difference of degree, which never proceeds so far as to enable us to call any component *absolutely* one or the other, is important. Too 'pure' a percept, or too 'deep' a feeling is in either case unconscious. It is not the purity or vividness of either that consciousness expresses, but a change in their relation, an impact of the two. Consciousness is therefore change, it is the ingression of the new. It is the seat or aggregation of the novelties in a man's relations with reality. Such new qualities clump to form a conscious field, as bacteria clump in serum. The field is not static; it grows, changes and expands. It is not self-determined; on the contrary the field is the expression of the determining relation between the organism and the rest of reality.

In examining these contents we may sort them so as to pay special attention to the *forms*, to the percepts and memories of situations encountered in reality, to the bits of reality apparently embedded in consciousness.

The study of consciousness then becomes a study of the bits of reality embedded in consciousness, or the portions of outer reality in the conscious field. There is a tendency to call the outer reality quite simply 'Reality', so that this sorting becomes the study of reality.

The objective of such a study is truth. It is the goal of science. In so far as the 'situation' portions of the conscious field separate themselves out, a greater and greater grip of reality is presumed to be obtained. Such a programme is of course the programme above all of 'physics'.

But just because all contents of the conscious field, in so far as they represent the ingression of the new into the subject-object relation, contain both emotion and percept, feeling and memory, it is never possible in fact to find a conscious quality which is all situation and bare of feeling. The following-out of the programme of physics therefore gradually strips the world of reality of all qualities in consciousness in which a feeling tone or 'subjective factor' is concerned. This means stripping the real world, the object of science, of all reality. It becomes simply a group of equations.

But equations are mental. They represent the laws of the comparison of qualities between themselves. Thus the real world becomes virtually nothing—unappetising and bare of interest. It becomes, finally, meaningless. Thus, although science, alone of activities, has as its goal objective truth and the extracting from consciousness of the 'pure' situation elements, this will, if carried to its utmost extent, rob truth of truth. For truth implies some affective attitude, some relation of organism to environment, by which it is gener-

ated. Truth can never be a criterion of a complete system of metrics, considered as self-sufficient in themselves, for the circle of metrics is closed. They constitute a world in themselves. The only criterion here is consistency. The question we ask of metrics is: 'Is the world fully closed? Do we arrive back finally at our initial axioms?' Now this consistency is quite different from what we mean by truth, the goal of the scientist, which spurs him on in his arduous labour.

What then is this Truth? For what do we in fact search the field of consciousness in its name? The field of consciousness is not static, it is generated by change. Consciousness is the product or affective heat of a clash between the response of the organism and a situation to which the response is not exactly geared. The impact, changing both, is preserved in the organism's behaviour as a modification and in its consciousness as a feeling and a thought. This conscious field changes; it has its laws of flow and recombination. Man thinks, plans, wills, introspects. Consciousness is the continual ingression of the new. Consciousness is the sign of a behaviour modification. Man 'learns' by experience, by the ingression into his organism of the new. Consciousness is the result of interaction, and is a guide to action.

But action implies the organism. The organism acts. If consciousness is simply the individual's sum of behaviour modifications, available as a guide to fresh situations, if each impact changes organism and environment, truth is a criterion of action. A component of consciousness is only generated by a tension between response and situation which do not fit like hand in glove, and because there is a discrepancy there is energy, heat, perception, feeling, as the hand is forced into the glove and as a result hand and glove are both altered in shape. Truth then is given man in his attempt to change the world. In changing it, of course, he changes himself.



That is why science is never hypothesis alone. It is always hypothesis plus experiment. In the experiment there is a tension or contradiction between man's beliefs—the sum of his responses as a result of previous experience—and a given situation—the crucial experiment or discovery of a piece of reality which does not fit the response. As a result the hypothesis is changed. Man's consciousness is changed.

Hence science's history is a continual modification of hypothesis by experiment. As the result of each modification, man's relation to objective reality is changed—he alters from a being at the centre of the Universe to one on the limits of it, and then to a man in no absolute place. Truth always appears as a result of man's successful interaction with his environment. Always he can only find truth by changes and reality. By analysing, by setting up a mock world in the laboratory, by moving his position somewhere to view an eclipse, by making experiments in artificial lighting—in all such ways he changes reality, and all these are precursors to far vaster changes—bridges, ships, roads, tilled land. Each time, in altering reality, he generates new truth, and finds it only thus.

Hence, except in action, truth is meaningless. To attempt to find it in a mere scrutiny of the conscious field, by 'pure' thought, results not in truth but in mere consistency. The contents of the mind are measured against themselves without the incursion of a disturbance from outside, which disturbances in fact, in the past history of the field, are what have created it. Since innumerable consistent worlds are possible, there would be as many criteria of reality as there were people with different conscious experiences.

But action upon nature demands co-operation if it is to be fully effective. The organism which will be most in possession of truth, which will most deeply penetrate and widely change the environment, will be an organism able to co-

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operate with other organisms in that change. The very combination, by division of labour, produces a qualitative change. What millions of organisms do separately is nothing compared to what they can do in co-operation to a common goal. Truth appears as an outcome of the labour process, for it is the labour process that demands and at the same time dictates the co-operation of organisms.

Thus a mediating term now appears in truth, which we first analysed as an outcome of the bare organism faced by bare environment. But now the bare organism faces society and its culture, and the bare environment faces, not the lone organism, but the tremendous apparatus of co-operating men.

In fact this occurred from the very beginning. The labour process itself generates the co-operation which changes and expands the responses of the organism, and gives rise to sufficiently many new situations to make it possible to talk of 'truth'. From the very start the labour process, by the society it generates, acts as a mediating term in the production of truth.

From the very start the labour process gives rise to material capital. Simple enough at first, taking the form of mere tools, customs, magico-scientific objects, seeds, huts, these were yet all-important as the beginnings of culture. To our argument they bear this important relation, that all such enduring products represent social truths. The plough is as much a statement about the nature of reality as the instructions how to use it. Each is useless without the other; each makes possible the development of the other. All these social products are generated by the nature of reality, but their form is given by the organism in its interaction with reality. The nature of fields and plants imposes on the organisms specific types of co-operation in sowing and reaping and determines the shape of the plough. It imposes

on them language, whereby they signify to each other their duties and urge each other on in carrying them out. Once established the labour process, extending as remotely as observation of the stars, as widely as organisation of all human relations, and as abstractedly as the invention of numbers, gathers and accumulates truth. Faster and faster it proliferates and moves. The bare organism is to-day from birth faced with an enormous accumulation of social truth in the form of buildings, laws, books, machines, political forms, tools, engineering works, complete sciences. All these arise from co-operation; all are social and common. Generated by this capital, truth is the past relation of society to the environment accumulated in ages of experience. It is actually created by the conflict of social organisms with new situations in the course of the labour process.

But the very richness and complexity of this 'frozen' truth, the very elaborateness of an advanced culture and a functioning society, ensures that the naked organism will be confronted with the greatest possible variety of 'situations'. This will ensure the greatest possible activity of a man's consciousness, and the maximum of mutual transformation of his responses, his instincts, and the material environment. There will be a rapid ingression of newness. This itself will generate new truth. Man, as experiencing individual, will find himself constantly negating the truths given in his social environment.

Thus we see the cause of the apparent antinomies in truth. Truth appears to be in the environment, to be objective and independent of me. Yet the attempt to extract a completely non-subjective truth from experience produces only metrics. Moreover the environment changes only slowly, but the truth of science or reality as known to man has changed rapidly.

Truth, then, is in my environment, that is, in my culture,

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in the enduring products of the labour process. Thus truths, although similar in their lack of newness and fixation to my inherited responses, are yet different in that responses emerge from the unconscious, *inside* me, whereas the inheritances of culture come to me as 'situations', as things learned, taught, or told me, as experience, as *environment*. But I do not regard myself as bound to the social criteria of truth; on the contrary it is my task to change their formulations, where my experience contradicts them.

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But, it will be urged, we were to discuss beauty, and now it is only truth we have obtained. Writing when bourgeois English poetry was at its height at the same time as bourgeois German philosophy was reaching its climax, Keats said:

'Beauty is truth, truth is beauty'—that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

A modern bourgeois poet, T. S. Eliot, has announced himself unable to understand these lines of Keats, just as modern bourgeois philosophers show themselves unable to understand Hegel's dialectics. But we saw that the pursuit of truth was the study of the objective elements in the conscious field. We saw further that completely objective elements could never be obtained. A world built up in such a way dissolved into mere metrics, and truth became consistency. To every percept and thought, an affect or subjective tinge inevitably attached itself. We never had a mere situation but always a response to a situation.

Thus truth never stands by itself as 'pure'. It is always generated in action, in instinctive organismal response going out into the situation and modifying both itself and the situation, begetting emotion as a result. Absolute, static, eternal truth is thus impossible.

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But every such action involves a desire, a volition, aim, fear, disgust, or hope. Thus truth is always tinged with the subject and with emotion. This is not a discoloration. As we saw, any thoroughgoing attempt to wash truth clean of such affective discoloration simply washed the world away, for it becomes bare geometry. We do not feel ourselves passively responding to a situation, we feel active and subjective and seats of innovation. Necessarily so, because each transaction with a situation changes us, and therefore makes us a new centre of force. This is expressed directly in consciousness.

If we sort out of consciousness all the subjective elements we now orientate the same field *in an entirely different way*. The connexion between conscious contexts is no longer outer reality, but the responses. We now group all the conscious contexts into like responses (love, fear, self-preservation). The laws of thought now become the laws of affective association. The affective association of ideas discovered by Freud, which threw a flood of light upon dreams, is not so much the discovery of a secret connexion as a law arising from our mode of analysis of conscious contents. If we sort them according to the responses or somatic components, we discover ideas to be affectively associated. If we sort them according to the situation or environmental components, we find them to be associated by contiguity and other laws taken from the environment. Both methods are equally correct. Both affect and thought, both response and situation, are given in the one conscious glow.

When we are concerned with dream and day-dream, attention is introverted; the body ceases to be closely concerned with the situation. The response or instinctive element in consciousness then becomes dominant. Hence the value of the Freudian or affective analysis of consciousness in such states. The 'deeper', and more somatic, the innerva-

tions, the more dominating becomes the response. The more external and sensory the innervations, the more dominating becomes the situation. The environment rather than the instinct gives the main clue to the structure of the perceptual field; the response lays bare the secret structure of the phantastic field.

A development may take place. The body may be introverted, and unconcerned with its immediate environment, and yet it will not be dreaming, it will be thinking. It will be striving to mould its dream according to the nature of all past situations, according to its experience of outer reality. It will be attempting to realise the laws of outer reality, and penetrate its nature. This is science. It is a scientist thinking, however crudely, for there has been genuine synthesis between almost unconscious dream full of somatic drives and conscious perception, full of environmental shape. These have been fused in thought. Dream draws vividness and restraint from perception; perception gets a flexibility of recombination, an onward drive to a goal, from dream. The result is thought, as rational scientific thought.

But the same development leads to another. Behaviour is not only intra-somatic and conscious; it is also overt and visible in action. The organism is conscious, and is acted on by the environment, but it also behaves and acts on the environment. In its behaviour it is guided by perception, but perception cannot present it with a goal. Perception guides it but it is impelled by 'instinct'. The somatic element in consciousness now figures as a programme for change—what we 'want to do'. In trying to bring about our wishes, they too are transformed.

But perception is not 'pure' perception—perception *only* of the present situation. By introversion, by stiffening dream with the memories of past perceptions, perception has become 'rational' thought. Perception is widened into a

general scheme of reality as experienced over a time. Reason, or congealed cognition, now guides instinct. In helping to change the environment, cognition too is modified and becomes truer and subtler.

But how can I by myself effect more than the slightest change in my environment? I need the co-operation of other men. But this involves perceptions held in common: we must all have similar views of reality. Reason and perception therefore become social, become crystallised in languages, tools, techniques. This has the advantage that I can now draw not only on my brief experience of percepts, but on the combined and sifted experiences of thousands of generations, preserved in language, tool, or technique. This has become dominating. Even from the start it was so; man found himself, by the necessities of the labour process, sharing a common view of reality, and inheriting the seeds, experience, and advice of a preceding generation. Even before language, the labour process, if it involved only common hunting tactics not inherited but taught, would involve a common world-view however crude, and would generate a Truth resident not wholly in oneself but also in one's environment. Thus long before science has a name or a distinct existence, it is generated as a social product. Truth is created and extended before the concept could exist, as part of the labour process.

But the labour process, involving a social view of the necessities of the environment, a general consciousness in man of laws existing outside him in reality, involves also a social unity of response to these necessities and this environment. The interaction produces a change, and as the change becomes more willed, it generates increasing consciousness not only of the structure of reality but also of one's own needs. The goal is a blend of what is possible and what is desirable, just as consciousness is a blend of what is response

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and what is situation. Or, to be more precise, just as consciousness is the product of a tension between response and situation which do not precisely fit each other, so the goal is a product of a tension between what is possible and what is desirable. They are forced to meet; they are synthesised; and as a result both are changed, are fused into an attainable goal. Of all possibles and all desirables, the laws of reality enforce only one wedding, and the child is a new generation.

But if the desirable is to be held clearly in mind, if all action is somatically motivated, or *willed*, and therefore has an affective as well as a perceptual element—then there must be a community of desire as well as a community of perception. There must be a community of instinct, as well as a community of cognition. The heart, as well as the reason, must be social. The community must share a body in common, as well as an environment in common. Its hopes, as well as its beliefs, must be one. This hope, which is the opposite to science, we may call art. Just as Truth is the aim of science, Beauty is the end of art.

But both deflate abjectly if we attempt to isolate them. If we try to get them 'pure' we get nothing. Both are products of the living organism in the real world, and this means that every element is determined both by organism and environment.

We saw that the pursuit of Truth, and the separation of all environmental elements in the conscious field, produced not Truth but consistency. It produced an unreal dematerialised world, devoid of quality; in fact a mere series of equations. The pursuit of Beauty, and the separation of all affective elements in the conscious field, produces not Beauty but physiology. We get merely the body with its reactions.

But both Truth and Beauty are in fact generated already blended in action, in the social labour process visualised



throughout human history. In this they are indivisible. Both continually play into each other's hands. Science makes the percepts, the possibilities, the world with which the body's desire concerns itself, continually richer and more subtle. Art makes the body's incursions into reality always more audacious, more curious, and more indefatigable.

Of course to the bourgeois with his ideal closed worlds, Truth and Beauty, art and science, appear not as creative opposites but as eternal antagonists. Even Keats, who saw their kinship, could yet complain that science had robbed the rainbow of its beauty. This is because science and art, as long as they seem something distinct, situated in the environment entirely on the one hand (science) and in the heart entirely on the other (art), must seem exclusive and inimical. They seem to raise up two different worlds, of which we can choose one only. One is bare of quality, and the other is destitute of reality, so that we cannot rest easily on either horn of the dilemma. Only when we see that the separation is artificial and that response and situation are involved throughout consciousness and are part and parcel of the social process which generates both truth and beauty—only then can we see that there is no such deadly rivalry as we supposed, but that on the contrary these opposites each create the other. The 'secret' connexion between the two is the world of concrete society.

In all social products, therefore, affect and percept, response and situation, inevitably mingle. They do not merely mingle, they activate each other. In language every word has an affective as well as a cognitive value. The weight of each value varies in each case. Some words, such as interjections, are almost entirely affective. Others, such as scientific names, are almost entirely cognitive. But an entirely affective language—that is, sounds having only

affective associations—ceases to be language. It becomes music. An entirely cognitive language—that is, sounds having only cognitive associations—also ceases to be a language; it becomes mathematics. In doing so, both seem to exchange rôles. Music no longer refers to outer reality; but it does not disappear into the body; it becomes for the body outer reality. For the body, listening to the music, the sounds are now environment; nothing is referred to. Mathematics, though it has no affective reference, does not disappear into the environment. On the contrary it becomes pure thought; it becomes the body operating on the environment. Cognition and affection can never be separated. The attempt to do so simply begets a new thing, in which they are united again.

Not only language but all social products have an affective rôle. Each society evolves its own gestures, deportment, and manners. These include a reference to reality, a pointing to something, the necessary opening of doors to get through them, or lifting of food to feed oneself, or moving of legs to get from one place to another. But these actions also include an affective element: all can be done ‘beautifully’ or artistically. One can point with an air, open a door politely, feed oneself quietly and ‘off silver’, walk slowly and with dignity. All this is beauty; all this is desirable; all this is a social product. Different societies have quite different notions of what is desirable in these things.

All objects, from a house to a hat, share these cognitive and affective elements. A hat has a real cognitive environmental function, so has a house. The hat must keep rain and sun off our heads; the house must keep out wind and weather, resist perhaps the robber and marauder. But both are modified by the affective element. The hat must add honour, dignity and grace to the head. The house must express respectability or power; and must contain rooms of a

certain shape and size, because of the manners and social customs of the age.

Action designed only to express an affective purpose becomes, like music, an environment; dancing is a *spectacle*. Action designed only to express a cognitive purpose, and to achieve a goal which is not in itself really desired, becomes action in itself desirable, as in the mock-flights and trivial goals of sport, in which all energies are bent on securing something not really to be desired. Between sport and dancing stretch all the forms of action designed to secure an affective but real goal, that is, all forms of work, from sowing and reaping to factory production.

All forms of representation have the same duality. The faithful congruence of representation to reality, robbed of all affective elements, becomes not really a representation at all, but a symbol—the diagram. The attempt to make representation purely affective, without reference to environment, produces what is in itself an environment—the town and the building. Between lies the richness of pictorial illustration—the painting, the sculpture, the film, and the play.

In primitive civilisation this intimate generation of truth and beauty in the course of the labour process and their mutual effect on each other is so clear that it needs no elaboration. The harvest is work, but it is also dance; it deals with reality, but it is also pleasure. All social forms, gestures, and manners have to primitives a purpose, and are both affective and cognitive. Law is not merely the elucidation of a truth in dispute, but the satisfaction of the gods, of the innate sense of rightness in man's desires. Myths express man's primitive instincts and his view of reality. The simplest garment or household utensil has a settled beauty. Work is performed in time to singing, and has its own fixed ceremony. All tasks have their lucky days. Truth and beauty, science and art are primitive, but at

least they are vitally intermingled, each giving life to the other.

It is the special achievement of later bourgeois civilisation to have robbed science of desirability and art of reality. The true is no longer beautiful, because to be true in bourgeois civilisation is to be non-human. The beautiful is no longer real, because to be beautiful in bourgeois civilisation is to be imaginary.

This itself is simply a product of the fundamental bourgeois position. Our own proposition about beauty is this: whenever the affective elements in socially known things show social ordering, there we have beauty, there alone we have beauty. The business of such ordering is art, and this applies to all socially known things, to houses, gestures, narratives, descriptions, lessons, songs and labour.

But to the bourgeois this proposition seems monstrous, for he has been reared on the anarchy of the social process. He refuses to recognise it. He recognises only one social process—commodity-manufacture, and one social tie—the market. The bourgeois produces for and buys from the market, governed as an individual by social relations masquerading as laws of supply and demand.

Thus any attempt at social consciousness which necessarily involves the manipulation of desires, i.e. of 'the laws' of supply and demand, seems to him outrageous. But this is just what art is—the manipulation or social ordering of desires, and therefore of the laws of supply and demand. Art gives values which are not those of the market but are use-values. Art makes 'cheap' things precious and a few splashes of paint a social treasure. Hence the market is the fierce enemy of the artist. The blind working of the market murders beauty. All social products, hats, cars, houses, household utensils and clothes, become in the main un-beautiful and 'commercialised', precisely because the maker

in producing them does not consider social process, does not scheme how to order socially their affective values in accordance with their use, but merely how to satisfy a demand for them with the maximum profit to himself. This extends finally to those products which have no other purpose than affective ordering—paintings, films, novels, poetry, music. Because here too their affective ordering is socially unconscious, because it is not realised that beauty is a social product, there is a degradation even of these 'purest' forms of art products. We have commercialised art, which is simply affective massage. It awakens and satisfies the instincts without expressing and synthesising a tension between instinct and environment. Hence wish-fulfilment novels and films; hence jazz. The bourgeois floods the world with art products of a baseness hitherto unimaginable. Then, reacting against such an evident degradation of the artist's task, art withdraws from the market and becomes non-social, that is *personal*. It becomes 'highbrow' art, culminating in personal fantasy. The art work ends as a fetish because it was a commodity. Both are equally signs of the decay of bourgeois civilisation due to the contradictions in its foundation.

The ravages of bourgeois unconsciousness destroy not only the social product but the producer. Labour now becomes, not labour to achieve a goal and to attain the desirable, but labour for the market and for cash. Labour becomes blind and unconscious. What is made, or why it is made, is no longer understood, for the labour is merely for cash, which now alone supports life. Thus all affective elements are withdrawn from labour, and must therefore reappear elsewhere. They now reappear attached to the mythical commodity which represents the unconscious market—cash. Cash is the music of labour in bourgeois society. Cash achieves objective beauty. Labour in itself

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becomes increasingly distasteful and irksome, and cash increasingly beautiful and desirable. Money becomes the god of society. Thus the complete disintegration of a culture on the affective side is achieved, and has resulted from the same causes as its disintegration on the cognitive side.

Beauty, then, arises from the social ordering of the affective elements in socially known things. It arises from the labour process, because there must not only be agreement about the nature of outer reality, but also agreement about the nature of desire. This agreement is not static. In the social process, outer reality becomes increasingly explored, and this makes the social process more far-reaching and deeply entrenched in the environment, while each fresh sortie into reality alters the nature of desire, so that here, too, fresh integrations are necessary. This pressure, both in science and art, appears as an individual experience. A scientist inherits the hypotheses, and an artist inherits the traditions, of the past. In the scientist's case an experiment, and in the artist's case a vital experience indicates a discrepancy, a tension, whose synthesis results in a new hypothesis or a new art work. Of course the scientist feels the tension as an error, as something in the environment; the artist as an urge, as something in his heart.

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Science and art, as we use them in current language, are more partial and restricted than in my use. Science, as generally used, involves not all the cognitive elements in the labour process but only the *new* elements. The scientist is on the border line where new hypotheses are generated to modify technique. In factory, in building, in housework, and all daily occupation, the cognitive elements are familiar and traditional. They are technique rather than science. The world-view is not expanding here; reality is as our fathers

knew it; but the scientist is situated on the very expanding edge of the world-view. Here new regions are continually coming into sight; discrepancies in experience continually arise to make him modify yesterday's formulations. The same applies to the artist. In daily life, in manners, desires, morals, hopes and patriotisms we tread the daily round; we feel as our fathers do; but the artist is continually besieged by new feelings as yet unformulated, he continually attempts to grasp beauties and emotions not yet known; a tension between tradition and experience is constantly felt in his heart. Just as the scientist is the explorer of new realms of outer reality, the artist continually discovers new kingdoms of the heart.

Both therefore are explorers, and necessarily therefore share a certain loneliness. But if they are individualists, it is not because they are non-social, but precisely because they are performing a social task. They are non-social only in this sense, that they are engaged in dragging into the social world realms at present non-social and must therefore have a foot in both worlds. They have a specially exciting task, but a task also with disadvantages comparable to its advantages. The scientist pays for his new realms by travelling without affective companionship, with a certain deadness and silence in his heart. The artist explores new seas of feeling; there is no firm ground of cognitive reality beneath his feet; he becomes dizzy and tormented. Those not on the fringes of the social process get their life less new but more solid, less varied but more stable. Their values are more earthy, more sensuous, more mature. They are rooted, certain, and full. It is time for the antagonism between scientist and artist to cease; both should recognise a kinship, as between Arctic and tropical explorers, or between bedouins of the lonely deserts and sailors on the featureless sea.

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But they must not suppose that a line can ever be drawn between science and other social cognition, and art and other social affection. The social process is far too closely woven for that. The ingression of new values takes place at all parts; only we call certain operations scientific or artistic because there we see the ingression most clearly. In education cognitive and emotional tradition is chiefly at work, but on the one hand even here there is an ingression of the new, and, on the other hand, the artist and the scientist are being educated as well as learning new things all their lives.

If they remember this, they will not make the mistake of supposing they are opposite poles, between which the whole social process is generated. This is to suppose profit produces capital. In fact profit is produced by capital, and yet continually augments it. Science and art represent the profit on social capital. They are pushed out into the deserts of the unknown by the very workings of society. They lead, but they were instructed; they find new worlds of life, but they were supported by the old. Always we find only terms drawn from the labour process to be adequate to describe their function, and only this can explain the nature of Beauty and Truth, how man can never rest on the truth his eyes tell him or the beauty his heart declares, but must go about finding new truth, and cannot rest until he has created with his hands a new beauty.

The artist takes bits of reality, socially known, to which affective associations adhere, and creates a mock world, which calls into being a new affective attitude, a new emotional experience. New beauty is thus born as the result of his social labour.

But if art works were artificial, and beauty is a social product, how do we find beauty in the natural thing, in seas, skies, a mountain, and daffodils?

To separate in this way natural things from artificial is to



make as dangerous a distinction as that between environmental and affective elements in the conscious field, or between mental and material qualities. Society itself is a part of nature, and hence all artificial products are natural. But nature itself, as seen, is a product of society. The primitive does not see seas, but the river Oceanus; he does not see mammals, but edible beasts. He does not see, in the night sky, blazing worlds in the limitless void, but a roof inlaid with patines of bright gold. Hence all natural things are artificial. Does that mean that we can make no distinction between nature and art? On the contrary, we can clearly distinguish two opposites, although we must recognise their interpenetration. In all phenomena, from hats to stars, seasons to economic crises, tides to social revolutions, we can distinguish varying portions of change, varying portions of the ingression of the unlike. The most rapid evolution is that of human society, of its customs, towns and hand-made products. The next that of animals and plants. The next that of the solar system. The next that of our galaxy. The whole universe in fact changes, but it changes at different rates. The region of most change, human society, as it were, separates itself out from a background of least change, which we call 'nature'—stars, mountains and daffodils. The line can nowhere be precisely drawn; and in all cases it is man, a social product, confronting nature, and finding beauty in it. Nature finds no beauty in nature; animals do not look at flowers or stars. Man dies, and therefore it is the social process which has generated in him the ability to see beauty in flowers and stars. This ability changes in character. The sea is beautiful to a European, to an ancient Athenian, to a Polynesian islander, but it is not the same beauty; it is always a beauty rooted in their cultures. The frozen sea is to the Eskimo a different beauty from the warm sea of the Gulf; and the blazing sun of the Equator a differ-

ent beauty from the faint six-months-dead sun of the Arctic.

Those elements in nature which are most universal and have changed least in the history of man, may be expected to produce, in interaction with him, the most constant quality. Hence we feel rightly that there is something simple, primitive, and instinctive in the beauty we see in certain primitive, simple things. This must never be pushed too far. The richest and most complex appreciation of natural beauty belongs to the civilised man, not to the primitive. We may oppose the art-work just made to the enduring mountain as an artificial to a natural beauty, but the difference is one of degree. In both cases beauty emerges as a quality due to a man, in the course of social process, gazing at a piece of his environment. The ancient town, with weathered walls, full of history and character, is a part of nature, and is yet a completely artificial product; the sun lights it and the wind weathers it. There is no dichotomy between nature and art, only the difference between pioneers and settled inhabitants.

Art, then, conditions the instincts to the environment, and in doing so changes the instincts. Beauty is the knowledge of oneself as a part of other selves in a real world, and reflects the growth in richness and complexity of their relations. Science conditions the environment to the instincts and in doing so changes the environment. Truth is the knowledge of the environment as a container for, and yet known by and partly composed of, one's own self and other selves.

Both are products of the labour process—that is to say, both are realised in action. Truth and Beauty are not the goals of society, for directly they become goals in themselves, they cease to exist. They are generated as aspects of the rich and complex flow of reality. The scientist or the artist is only a special kind of man of action: he produces truth or beauty, not as an end but as the colour of an act. Conscious-

ness, society, the whole world of social experience, the universe of reality, is generated by action, and by action is meant the tension between organism and environment, as a result of which both are changed and a new movement begins. This dynamic subject-object relation generates all social products—cities, ships, nations, religions, the cosmos, human values.

Bourgeois culture is incapable of producing an æsthetics for the same reason that most of its social products are un-beautiful. It is disintegrating, because it refuses to recognise the social process which is the generator of consciousness, emotion, thought, and of all products into which emotion and thought enter. Because ideology is rooted in the labour process, the decay of an economy must reappear as a similar disintegration in the art of science which is rooted in it. Bourgeois economic contradictions are bourgeois ideological contradictions. The scientist and artist are forced on by the tension between past and present, tradition and experience. But tradition is the accumulated product of the past labour process as preserved; and experience is an experience in contemporary society.

Such a disintegration can only be revitalised by a transformation of the relations which, at the very roots, are destroying the creative forces of society. Change is dialectic; one quality gives birth to another by the revelation of the contradictions it contains, whose very tension begets the synthesis. The contradiction at the heart of bourgeois culture is becoming naked, and more and more clearly there is revealed the inextinguishable antagonism between the two classes of bourgeois economy, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The ruling class, the bourgeoisie, which exploits the labour power of the proletariat for profit; in doing so generates an illusion which sets the pattern for all the structure and ideology of bourgeois civilisation. Man is

held to be free in proportion to his ignorance of the social process, as a part of which he functions. Instead of bourgeois activity being governed by knowledge of the social process, it is governed by the market, by the 'laws of supply and demand', by the free circulation of cash, in short, by mere 'accident', for accident is man's name for his ignorance of determinism. Man is held to be free by virtue of unrestricted rights over property: but this merely conceals the domination of a few, who own the means of production and can traffick in labour-power, over the many who have nothing but labour-power to sell. The few believe that this dominating power they exercise makes them free, that in the act of domination their actions are not determined; but the event—the internal collapse of their economy in war and crisis and of their ideology in anarchy—reveals that not even they the lords are free, but their desires have disrupted their culture.

And who can transform it? Only those who are conscious of the cause of its collapse, who realise that to be without conscious social organisation is not to be free, and that power over men by men is not freedom, even though concealed, but all the more if concealed, is mere ignorance of the necessities of society. It is precisely the proletarians who know all this by the pressure of the economy whose cruel weight\* they support. In their struggles against exploitation they learn that only conscious organisation, Trade Unions and factory Acts, can give them freedom from oppression. When they see their masters, the bourgeoisie, powerless to prevent war, unemployment, and the decay of the economy they have built up, the proletariat learns that this power of men over men, exercised by a simple act of the will and congealed in a property right, is not freedom for either class. It is only a delusive short cut in which humanity was for a time lost. Freedom appears, socially, when

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men take no short cuts of 'will' but learn the necessities of their own nature and of external reality and thus share a goal in common. Then the common goal and the nature of reality uniquely determine the only possible action without compulsion, as when two men combine, without 'orders', to lift a stone that lies in their path. In such an understanding, a new science, a new art, and a new society are already explicit, and to build it involves a proletariat which has already overthrown the bourgeoisie, and in revolution and reconstruction has transformed civilisation. In a society which is based on co-operation, not on compulsion, and which is conscious, not ignorant, of necessity, desires as well as cognitions can be socially manipulated as part of the social process. Beauty will then return again, to enter consciously into every part of the social process. It is not a dream that labour will no longer be ugly, and the products of labour once again beautiful.

## MEN AND NATURE

*A Study in Bourgeois History*

IN the course of our examination of bourgeois culture, we have always reached, at a certain stage in our analysis, a basic world-view which is the product of the bourgeois economy and gives a characteristic shape to every form of its ideology. It is not an error in the sense that it can be isolated, as a separate mistake, from every department of culture. It is only revealed on analysis as an unseen force, not explicit in the formulations of that culture, but acting like a pressure from outside. It gives to that culture a characteristic distortion which is not visible to those who still live within the framework of that economy. This bourgeois world-view is not however a fixed consciousness. Like the society of which it is a product, it changes, and may even appear as its own opposite—just as a photograph has positive and negative components, and yet remains the same partial view of reality.

This world-view is the product of a society divided into classes, as all previous highly cultivated civilisations have been. The essence of all class-societies is that the ruling power is exercised by a minority. Social process is directed not by the necessities of the process alone—of which society is as yet not fully conscious—but by the wills of the ruling individuals. Thus the individual will appears as alone active and creative. The aim of all society—man's attempt to become free of the forces of nature—seems in such societies

to be realised by passive obedience by the ruled to the will of the ruler, who is guided by his individual desires. This is how it appears to rulers and ruled, but in fact both classes are the outcome of a division of labour and derive their rôles, not from Will, but from their status in social production.

Such a division of the labour process, which involves a class passively and blindly labouring and another class directing these labours according to their consciousness of the necessities of the case, is both an advance and a weakness as compared with the primitive communism of the simplest societies, in which each member labours for the tribe without important distinction or difference. It is an advance because it involves a sharpening of consciousness at the pole of the ruling class and a more intensive production of social wealth. It is a weakness because it produces a deadening of consciousness at the pole of the ruled class and a cleavage between the conscious enjoyment of the ruling class and the blind action of the ruled class. It makes possible a permanent inequality of status because the ruling class, by virtue of directing the labour of the exploited, can also ensure the flow of the bulk of its products into their own lives, leaving to the exploited the minimum necessary to ensure an efficient existence.

Thus a material inequality is reflected in an inequality of consciousness. Not only does thinking become the prerogative of the exploiting class, but it also gradually becomes separated from action and moreover is favoured socially to the extent to which it separates itself from action, because it is just this separation which has generated its superior status as the mark of the ruling, 'cunning', or administrative class. This separation is anti-social because it hamstringing thought and baffles action; and yet it is produced by social forces.

The direction of their labours by the ruling class is not of course the result of a free election by the ruled in favour of the members of the ruling class. Were this the case they would not be a ruling class but organs of society, like the look-out animal posted by a herd of herbivores. Actually, their direction is coercive, and is enforced by the forms of society. The class is created by a *right*, a legal *form* of property, which is enforced by the conscious organs of society against the exploited class. This cannot be a right to an empty thing, but must be a property right in the *means of production*. In all societies the means of production have to be worked by men. In primitive societies virtually the only means of production are men and land, there is nothing else of economic importance, and here the right which forms the basis of a ruling class is the right to own land and men. In later civilisations it is also the right to own individually all those means of production without which men cannot exist. The right to own these, coercively enforced by society, ensures that the owning class rules the non-owning class, even without the right to own men.

The form of its ownership is what constitutes a class, and the rights of the ruling class, visible in its laws, conventions and religion, are also the expression of the main characteristics of the economy. The labour process is common to all societies; the division into exploiters and exploited is a feature peculiar to class societies; the form this division takes is peculiar to each particular class society. Slave-owning societies are divided, broadly, into free men and slaves; feudal societies into lords and serfs; developed bourgeois societies into capitalists and 'free' workers, who must bring their labour-power to market because they are excluded from ownership of all means of production.

The ideology of all such civilisations is that of the ruling class, for the division of labour into a class, functionally, of



thinkers and a class, functionally, of labourers causes the aggregation of all social consciousness at the pole of the ruling class, as long as the division persists. Hence even the most developed culture expresses at its height the view of the ruling class—its aspirations, its vicissitudes, and its weaknesses. In a revolution, when power passes from one class to another, a corresponding ideological revolution takes place, though evidently this can only happen if the conditions of the labour process have developed an antagonistic consciousness in the exploited class.

Thinking emerges historically as a partner to action, both vested in the one individual. Their separation in the class division of society begets eventually a corresponding inefficiency of action and decay in thought, so that the collapse of a culture is marked simultaneously by a material decline and an ideological bankruptcy.

The division of labour is a progressive element in social development, and the fact that individuals genetically gifted with 'brains' perform directive rôles and others gifted for action perform active rôles is not in itself anything but desirable. Both thinker and actor then form part of the one social process, and there is a unity in social action as when an architect plans, a foreman directs, and labourers build a house. But the consciousness of a class society does not emerge as the consciousness of a specific labour process, for then there would not be a class ruling on the basis of property right, but administrators or administrative organs, thrown up by society according to the necessities of the labour process. But this consciousness emerges divorced from action or from society, as a right inherent in the individual or in the nature of things. If this right emerged from the necessities of the social process it would not need formal protection; it does not so emerge and must therefore be secured and protected by laws, by the visible forms of

society, which must therefore be *class* forms. The right may come by inheritance, by being born or called to a status which carries with it the right or by some kind of formal transfer between individuals. And all the forms of society are directed to defending the right.

Hence we do not in such societies get men naturally and by the consent of society emerging as thinkers, but consciousness is established as the right of a class, which at the best can only be painfully won by a few in other classes, who are then sucked into the ruling class. It is this buttressing of rights which produces the characteristic distortion in the ideology of that class, and this class ideology is, as we have seen, also the ideology of that society's whole culture. All such ideologies of a ruling class have this in common, that they see thought, consciousness, will, their class prerogatives), not as determined by action or by the outer reality which thought goes out in action to know and change, but as innate—free in the sense in which they regard themselves as free. Consciousness becomes a privilege which is not actively created but which is 'given' by birth or chance. This is an illusion, and cannot be pursued without revealing its contradictions. It is illusion common to all class-cultures, and therefore to all the ideologies so far produced by history except that of dialectical materialism.

In bourgeois society the distorting effect of the illusion is least in physics, which is consequently the first science to emerge in that society and the last to collapse. The distortion will necessarily be greatest in the sphere of social relations, in the science of society or *history*, and in fact of bourgeois history one can ask—has bourgeois history yet been born? History as interpreted by bourgeois culture has shown only the faintest resemblance to a scientific discipline, and this applies most sharply to those very historians who regard themselves as truly scientific and objective.

Indeed, the creation of a science of history involves the doom of bourgeois culture. It is for this reason that bourgeois historians have so frequently arrived at the conclusion that history is not, and cannot be, a science. They were correct in this measure, that history cannot be a science within the sphere of bourgeois culture.

Capitalist economy, as it develops its contradictions, reveals, as at opposed poles, on the one hand the organisation of labour in the factory, in the trust, in the monopoly; on the other hand the disorganisation of labour in the competition between these units. The development of monopoly and the increase of amalgamations by no means eases the tension of the transition to a completely organised world of industry. Such a transition requires the extinction of capitalist property and the end of the exploitation of labour, but the increasing organisation *within* the monopoly produces increasing competition *between* the monopolies. The amalgamations of capitalist economy result in violent and disruptive struggles on the part of profit-seeking capital to find elbow room for profit outside 'stabilised' markets. 'Stabilisation' thus generates acute instability, and the nationalisation of a market by a monopoly produces a flow of profit which, just because the market is self-limited by monopoly, cannot be used in it and is therefore exported to weaker markets as a new disruptive factor. This external disorganisation, which is intensified by increasing internal organisation as long as it takes place within the categories of bourgeois economy, is seen clearly to-day in the growth of economic nationalism and Fascism, and the fresh round of imperialist wars now preparing.

But just the same phenomenon is seen in bourgeois ideology. We have highly organised sciences or departments of biology, physics, psychology, anthropology, engineering, aesthetics, education, economics, philology, and the like, and

yet not only do they not form an integrated world-view, but their very increase of internal organisation produces a disorganisation of culture as a whole. As the result of the development of its constituent disciplines, bourgeois culture is violently disrupted—the same disaster as is befalling capitalist economy, and due ultimately to the same cause.

The only real solution of the contradictions of capitalist economy is of course the elimination of the factor which produces the external disorganisation in spite of the internal organisation. As soon as the external disorganisation grows faster than the internal organisation (which has been the case since 1900), from that time bourgeois economy is doomed, and only awaits the hand of whatever executioner history has provided—in this case the proletariat. This doom involves the complete socialisation of production and the realisation by society of the laws of its own functioning, through consciousness of which it becomes able to organise itself.

Capitalist economy has become conscious of the environment. It knows the necessities involved in making matter obey its will. It has done so with the illusion that this control alone is sufficient to force nature to obey man's will. But the knowledge of non-human necessities is not enough to ensure the conquest of nature. Man is a part of nature, and it is not man in the abstract of which society is composed but of actual men, in given times and places. The conquest of nature is the work of these men organised in a society, and nature only obeys 'man' in so far as this organisation, or 'civilisation', is an accomplished fact, and she by no means obeys 'a man', an *individual*, except in so far as his purpose is a part of the purpose of organised men as a whole. This involves co-operation. A number of individuals striving for antagonistic ends is itself disorganisation and will result, not in nature obeying one man's will (for the others negate it)

or the sum of wills (for the wills contradict each other), but in a mean which will reflect none of their wills—such an unwished-for result as a war or a slump.

A man does not control nature by knowing the laws necessary to make hats, or by being free of the domain of physics, for nature obeys not man the individual but men organised in a society, and fulfils not any particular will but the historic outcome of all wills in action. Therefore men must know in addition to the necessities of 'nature', the necessities of co-operation, and the historic outcome of actions undertaken socially. This knowledge is part and parcel of the co-operation of social action, for if it is known that such and such actions are necessary to attain an end, those actions must be taken. Hence such a knowledge involves the overthrow of bourgeois economy and its replacement of communist economy.

But bourgeois economy is not homogeneous—it is a class society. Indeed that very class division is what produces its characteristic form. There is always a class to whose individual wills all society bends and whose individual wills are in the sum realised in the conquest of nature, whatever the consequences to the rest of society. This class of victorious wills, the ruling class, is one that, as capitalist economy decays, necessarily grows more limited. The area of freedom in capitalist economy progressively contracts. But this by no means involves the peaceful vacation by this class of their thrones, for their possession of all social freedom, while it is a diminishing freedom in sum, is also one which, because the class itself is attenuated, is *per capita* greater. Thus the inducement to struggle to retain their power increases at the same rate as their power as individuals over social production increases. But at the other pole, the forces of the unfree gather.

All this is reflected in the present state of culture. Witness—

ing its widespread disorganisation, we ask: 'How can men's knowledge of the necessities of "nature", as evidenced in biology, physics and the rest, be integrated and reconciled in a connected world-view, and made useful to man so that it becomes more than theoretical knowledge—knowledge active in society?'

The answer is: 'Only by an understanding of the crucible in which this knowledge was generated.' Is this not the function of psychology? No, for psychology is the science of the individual mind and all its various forms of consciousness. These forms themselves are given it by its experiences, and these are social experiences. The disorganisation of these internally organised but closed worlds of human knowledge can only be cured by an understanding of the very thing of which they are the product—of society. It is not man, the individual, who produces science; the criterion of a scientific truth is that it is *objective*, that it can be tested by other men—not by all men (lunatics and morons and savants) but men as socially organised, and hence, through the actions and appropriate organisation of society, competent to test these truths. The 'solution' of the anarchy of bourgeois culture is the same as for bourgeois economy, that men become conscious of the necessities of themselves, not as individuals or as humanity in the undifferentiated abstract, but as men in social action—in the case of economy as a whole, this means conscious as men actually engaged in producing for social ends; and in the case of ideology in particular it means conscious as men actually engaged in studying reality for social ends. But men—real, contemporary individuals—can only become so conscious as they are part of the transformation of bourgeois into communist culture, as real participants in the mêlée of the revolutionary struggle, which transformation is itself the result of the actions of the anti-bourgeois class, the proletariat. The

proletariat, because of its position and organisation in bourgeois society, is the vanguard of the fight. It seems therefore that to understand history it is necessary to make it, and this in fact is the case; it is a necessity in which history is not different from but similar to other sciences.

The ground plan of history as a science was laid by Marx and Engels, and was an outcome of their own participation in the history-making struggle of the working-class at that time—the first stage in the anti-bourgeois offensive of the proletariat. This science of Marx and Engels is *historical materialism*—a view of the world as a unity because it is a material world, and a view of the world as a development because it has a history. When bourgeois culture has been completely replaced by communist culture, as the result of a social revolution and its aftermath of socialist construction, then all the organised disciplines of bourgeois culture will be integrated in a consistent world-view. That world-view will necessarily be historical—that is to say, it will be the view of the development of men as socially organised beings, not an arbitrary or spontaneous development, but a determined process. Psychology, biology, and physics will not be *absorbed* by history, any more than factory organisation or school organisation or theatre organisation will be absorbed by social organisation. By the removal of the disruptive factor, private profit, these organisations will generate the social organisation and, as a result of this organisation, themselves differentiate and become enriched. The renaissance of history will not therefore be the amalgamation of the sciences, but the removal of the hidden force that was distorting and isolating them to an increasing degree. Once this is removed, they will communicate, and this communication will be history. This communication will revitalise them and raise them to new heights, for it is just their isola-

tion and their ignorance of their own roots in social process that is holding back their development.

If man has, so far, been unable to write history, it means that all civilisation up to the present has been a part of the prehistoric stage of society. Man's understanding of history in a scientific sense is shown by his capacity to make it, not blindly but according to his will; just as his understanding of physics is shown by his ability to make the elements fulfil his predictions. Thus the understanding of history is involved with that very transition from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom, which is the characteristic of the last stage of pre-history, the emergence of the proletariat as a class to end classes and so inaugurate an *historic* civilisation.

Marx was the first who was able to show that history was really made by men—not by man in the abstract as a developing animal, nor by outstanding men as sporadic forces, but constantly by the whole group of individuals existing in society. That is not to say he saw history as the story of a group, for this is again to abstract, to lump concrete individuals into an ideal group. It was because history was the story of different individuals playing different parts that the relations between them were important, and just because they arose as the result of society's action on matter, their expression in art, morals, science, religion and law were real factors in the history of society. It was because Marx saw that history was the story of all individuals that he saw it must be the science of *organised* society, for only in organisation do individuals acquire a meaning; it is only by virtue of the warp and woof of manifold relations engendered by social relations, which intersect in nodes, that the nodes or individuals are individualised and become more than specimens of a species.

What is history? It is the story of men. But men may be considered as lumps of matter, and as such they perform in



the course of time certain movements. This is not the subject of history, but of physics. History is interested in those qualitative innovations of mankind which differentiate it from 'nature'—from dead matter and animals. History is the law of motion of men, not as matter or as living breathing organisms or as animals, but as something distinct from all these spheres, as *socially organised* animals.

History then only begins where physics, physiology and biology leave off. The laws of physics pervade all spheres, but physiology and biology have also new laws. The laws of physiology in turn are valid in biology which, however, is the domain of qualitatively new laws. History only starts when fresh laws, inclusive of but additional to physical, physiological and biological laws begin to operate, and the evolution and change of these laws is the subject of history. It is only in this sphere that we can begin to speak of history. But what is it that distinguishes man, in all stages of humanity, from the beasts? Marx had only to ask and answer this question to uncover the whole sphere of laws appropriate to history.

History has this peculiarity additional to other sciences that, as it were, it forces man to bend round and look himself in the eyes.

Having proceeded through physics, physiology and biology to history, he finds as part of history, the production of these very sciences, which it thus transcends. The ideological circle is then closed, but only when it has included as material factors, as things linked together causally at each stage, every sphere of human activity. And the closure is only spatial—for history is what men make and men continue to live, and history, and all the ideologies of whose genesis it is the record, continue to unfold. It unfolds in the present, in our action as we live and move in the real society of to-day. Closed ideologically, the circle is open in action

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with which it is therefore unified. History leads from and through action to man's mind.

But the last thing the bourgeois wishes to do is to look himself in the eyes.

Marx's answer to the question, What is it that differentiates man from the animals? is this, that man is organised and organised in a social way: there is no such thing as lone man, but only real living men, and not merely men clumped like swarming locusts, but arranged in social relations arising out of economic production. The co-operation necessary to production makes them unite, and makes them men.

But (it may be said) the bees, ants and wasps unite for economic production, and this does not make them human. True, and what is the biological difference between the social insects and man? With them, this organisation is instinctive: bees and wasps in any situation will reproduce it. But men will not reproduce their society instinctively. European culture and capitalism are not instinctive. Men, turned as babes into a jungle, would wander through it as mere brutes, without individuality or consciousness, feral and dumb.

This proves that man's behaviour, ideas, art, science, laws, ethics, technique are not in *him*, in his genetic make-up. In his genetic make-up is only plasticity, the potentiality of this or a thousand other shapes. These things must therefore all be outside him and imprinted on him, not as a stereotype prints a drawing, mechanically, but rather as a body cell, by being in a certain part of the embryo and in a certain relation to other parts, becomes a bone, fat, or epidermal cell, and yet if transplanted will change its nature according to its new situation.

What is there then, outside man the unit, which has this effect on him? Simply the relations into which he enters with

other men, not willingly but because he is born into such a society, just as its relations with other cells affect the body cell, not voluntarily but because it is in such a place. Thus all the social relations expressed in all the possible interactions between man and man become, with Marx's interpretation, not something superadded to humanity or 'put into practice' by man, but something which makes the concrete man what he is. But, being so made, he makes other men different, still through these same real channels. Thus there is a real meaning to the definition of man as organised men, which separates it from the apparent organisation of the hive. The organisation is more than the individual men and cannot be predicted from the bare babe, because it has a law of growth of its own, occupying æons; but still it is an organisation of *men*. It is not an environment. The organisation of, for example, moths swarming round a flame or beasts round a salt lick is *environmental*; the organisation of bees in a hive is *innate*. But the organisation of men, which produces the very phenomena which history is to study, is neither; it is *social*.

History thus becomes, not the study of individuals, of their innate capacities and responsive changes to stimuli (for that is psychology) nor the study of the influence of the environment on men (for that is ecology), but it is the study of this organisation which is neither innate nor given in the environment, and which although it is the organisation of men in nature has a law of development neither human nor natural but economic. Now it is certain that bourgeois culture could not analyse this organisation, for it is just this organisation which bourgeois economy, as its pre-requisite, denies and veils in every possible way. Bourgeois culture is constantly proclaiming man the individual against this organisation, and is continually involving itself in contradiction, for all the qualities it calls 'individual', so far from

being antagonistic to organisation are generated by it, and the very state which it claims to be produced by organisation—featureless, unfree man—is man as he exists if robbed of organisation, or as he must have been before he passed from brute to human. This also involves that the bourgeois, struggling for these precious individualities, produces to his consternation still higher degrees of organisation, and struggling against organisation, produces a loss of individuality. Because he is struggling blindly he produces everything unexpectedly and anarchically, and he shows his lack of history by this simple test, that he is unable to make history consciously. History must always be made because men, conscious or unconscious, still live and so history comes into being for the bourgeois as a series of surprises and catastrophes—the opposite to what he desires. Man still remains, although the subject of history, in the prehistoric stage of culture.

But why, asks Marx, does this organisation come into being at all? It is not just *any* organisation—a chance arrangement of men, for it is evident that it has an evolution: that is to say, each stage is caused by and is born from the preceding stage. Why, if it is not determined by an instinct, is it not determined by the environment, and if it is not determined by either, is not its cause outside the Universe undetermined, immaterial, and unknowable? If one could explain how this organisation came into being, one could grasp its internal law of motion, and then the movement of history would be understood and man could make history consciously.

Either this organisation is divine, immaterial and unknowable, or it must come from the one activity which would form part of the Universe, and yet be distinguishable from man and environment taken separately—it must come from the interaction of men and environment *together*. If

these are separate, and then come together and produce a transaction, this transaction is a new and yet a determined material entity, and the result or synthesis is the starting point for a fresh movement.

But what is the interaction of man and environment, by which both are changed—both instinctual man and natural environment? This interaction is economic production, and it is true that it is just this which distinguishes man, at the earliest levels we know, from the animals. The visible results of this interaction, the real factors in history, are *environmentalised* men and *humanised* environment.

What is meant by environmentalised men? How can a human being be said to be conditioned by the environment?

In this way. If, for example, men wish to act upon the environment—say, to move a log—the shape of the log requires that a certain minimum number unite, that they all push together, and that they arrange themselves round the log in certain ways. They have then been organised by the task—by the necessities of the piece of nature to which they found themselves opposed.

They have also themselves changed as a result. Participation in the task has added to their knowledge of logs. They may as a result of many such different tasks come to invent the lever, and now in levering the log, they will be organised by the task in a different way. One level of organisation has led to another.

Thus all the distinctive qualities of man—his consciousness of reality, as for example the detachability of logs (science), his emotional relations as when all push heartily together on the log (art), his social relations as when one instructs others when to push (law, ethics, convention), his medium for socially integrating experience and volitions in connexion with the log (language, writing), are environ-

mental. So, it is true, are the organic adaptations to the water of the otter or the whale.

But whereas such organic adaptations are adaptations of the individual to the environment, those of men are *adaptations of the social relations of a body of men* to the environment. The otter is adapted to the water through his innate corporeal transformations. Man is still better adapted to the water, but only through society, because society has built ships, created ports, developed navigation, and can so master the water. Man's adaptations are not to the water, but to society, which only as a *whole*, as an organised co-operative system, is adapted to the water. Man's speech, physical knowledge and civic pride are not directly adapted to the water; they are adapted to an organised society, and only in organised society is there a human adaptation to water. When we say environmentalised man, we mean therefore men with an organisation produced among them by the necessities of the environment, and not men with individual changes like the otter's flat tail, produced in them by the environment. But since men are organised and are the units of the organisation, they are changed by it. They are not as units changed (like the otter) by the environment; they are changed as units by the organisation in which they participate to face the environment. They do not, as bare men and units, face the environment: as such units they face only organised society, into which they are born. What is this organisation? It is the organisation into which men are forced when as a body they work together to change the environment. It is the organisation imposed by economic production which generates the non-instinctive and characteristically human qualities.

The same organisation is also reflected in the humanised environment. The environment too is changed, not merely by the movement of material cities, roads, port, ships,

machinery, cultivated plants, agriculture, clearings), but also because this very process, by revealing the structure of reality more clearly, makes the environment different *for* man. The cosmos of our culture is a different environment from the cosmos of Egyptian man; and equally men, by being changed, become different for the environment and different for each other. The man of modern psychology and physiology is not the man of the Australian corroboree; the cosmos-for-the-blackfellow is not the cosmos-for-us.

Thus what we call organisation is the outcome of one double process—the environmentalisation of organised men, begetting all the human values—language, science, art, religion, consciousness; and the humanisation of nature, begetting the material changes in nature and man's own greater understanding of reality. Thus the development of humanity is not the increasing separation of man from a 'state of nature'. It is man's increasing interpenetration with nature. History is not, as the bourgeois supposes, the story of man in himself, or of human 'nature' (which changes too little to be the subject of history) but the story of this increasing interpenetration of nature by man as a result of his struggle with it. It is the story of economic production. The story of man is not the story of the increasing subjection of man's freedom and individuality to organisation in order to cope with nature, but his growth of freedom and individuality through organisation imposed by nature, in his interaction with it. The impossibility of ever finding human values or material causes separate in history is due to this very fact, that history is the study of their increasing interpenetration and of the rich development of this inseparable network of relations. History is the study of the object-subject relation of men-nature, and not of either separately. It is the study of the products of men acting on nature and being acted on by it. Nature never finds itself faced by

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individual men, but always by men working co-operatively in economic production; and man never finds himself faced by nature directly, but always by society organised by nature.

Thus, as a result of economic production a man finds himself born not into nature, but into a society already organised by interpenetration with nature, and into a nature already changed and X-rayed by this. He does not ever at any stage consciously form a society; society forms him. He in turn, as a result, is an active centre for a fresh transformation; he in turn forms society. Thus social development proceeds, and this is history.

History occurs not only on the human side, for, though society changes nature, nature so changed imposes fresh forms of organisation on society.

Which comes first then in time, the individual man or society? Did not individual men ever find themselves without society and, having regard to the necessities of the case, consciously enter into social co-operation? No, society came first, for it would have been sub-human anthropoids, unconsciously and blindly forced to enter into some rude forms of economic production unknown to other animals, which were by this very activity forced to become men.

### *Versions of History*

It was Marx who first laid bare then the subject of history, which was not till then distinguished and is to-day still not distinguished within the categories of bourgeois culture. He first showed that all men's activities are the subject of history and must be included in it. He showed that not merely 'great men' working along special channels, 'important ideas' or special occasions—'times of ferment'—produce the motion of civilisation; but every man, in the active relations he enters into with other men, has a causal rôle in deter-



mining the movements of history. Such a notion had before only been conceived under the false notion of a whole people passively and solidly providing the background of history, while great men, great occasions, and great cultures acted as accidental disturbances or inflammations of this passive lump. Marx's analysis of social relations was evolutionary and therefore revolutionary: it was from the activity of the people themselves, as a causal result, that great men, great occasions, and great cultures emerged, and in turn developed an internal law of motion.

Bourgeois culture, which set itself at its best period the task of understanding everything around it, has certainly *attempted* a causal scheme of history. It was doomed to fail in this attempt for the same reason as bourgeois philosophy was doomed to fail, because it seized hold first of the object as distinct from the subject, and then, forced by the logic of reality to seize the subject, it found itself in an equally untenable position. Subject and object, although opposite poles, interpenetrate. In the individual this interpenetration is sensation. In men this interpenetration is history. It is an *active* interpenetration, and in proportion as bourgeois culture becomes the culture of a class whose rôle is consciousness, and which is divorced from the exploited class whose task is action, there occurs the separating out of the two elements of sensation. Then both history and epistemology disintegrate.

The first causal scheme of history which bourgeois culture gave birth to was the environmental or metaphysical-materialist explanation, according to which man's social history is the result of his environment. A hot climate produces black races. Where there is coal, there will spring up an industrial culture. In the cold zones man is necessarily a hunter. On rivers and by the sea he is a navigator or fisher. Fertile zones support dense populations and make possible

town life. Regular floods ensure the creation of a settled agriculture.

Now this explanation, in spite of its power, ultimately has fatal weaknesses. It ignores the active creative rôle of man, and envisages him as passively moulded by the environment; this obviously cannot be the case.

For example, coal exists in many parts of the world: but only in a certain place and in a certain time did it give rise to industrial predominance. In other places cultural development was built up on water power. There are thousands of islands in the world: on some the inhabitants have no boats; on others, craft ranging from coracles and bladders to ocean-going liners. The ancient Britons lived over coal-seams, but for them the coal did not exist, and could not therefore determine their existence.

This reveals the 'hole' in the mechanical-materialist interpretation. The conditioning resources of Nature only exist, as determinants, insofar as from being things-in-themselves they become things-for-us. Coal did not exist for the ancient Briton because he had no technique for extracting it. The technique depends on a certain social organisation, when the necessary division of labour (capitalist mining) exists to make coal a determining social factor. Similarly, air only exists as an important transport medium for a race which has the necessary technique and social organisation to fly, and water only exists as a means of navigation for races able to build boats, the size and complexity of their boats in turn depending on their state of economic development.

Thus any scheme which makes the material configuration of the environment the determining factor in civilisation fails because it does not see that the environment is not something fixed. As environment, its very qualities depend on the subject, man, and primarily on his social organisation. It becomes an environment mineable in places only when

technique and social organisation make mining possible. It becomes an environment which can be tilled and will produce crops in places, only when social organisation has advanced to a stage where culture is possible. It becomes an environment which can be navigated in places only when social organisation makes possible the building and sailing of ships.

Thus, although the environment in the form of rivers, iron, coal and air contains determining factors for society at each stage of its evolution, which factors prove determinant depends upon the technical and social organisation of man at that stage: in brief, on his economic production. The environment as environment is changed by economic production, not merely in its reality but in its potentiality. Thus the causal rôle in history cannot be played by the environment as an active matrix for passive society, for society itself selects at each stage, not arbitrarily but as a result of precedent evolution, which are to be the determining factors in the environment.

On the realisation of this the explanation of history by environment breaks down, for after stripping from society all qualities not purely environmental, nothing recognisably human is left. It does not follow that the environment plays no part in determining history. On the contrary, at every stage the environment-for-man is determinant. But the environment-for-man changes at every stage, and its change must therefore be sought in society.

This leads to the idealistic interpretation of history, in which history is made by man's desires, ideas, and aims. But this theory is wrecked on the opposite difficulty to that of the mechanical-materialist explanation. The latter is unable to explain the change of the environment, the former is unable to explain the constancy of man—by constancy we mean his constancy as bare individual. If a Melanesian,

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an ancient Athenian and a modern English babe were allowed to grow up in a wood, or for that matter a deserted town or factory, none would show any of the characteristics of its parents' culture—either their language, their economic production, or their consciousness. They would grow up sub-human. This shows that man remains through the ages relatively unchanged, or that at least his genetic change is in no way proportioned to his change as a member of contemporary society. This raises the dilemma, how can the unchanging genotype, acting on the environment, beget the change we have discussed? The answer can only be that it is a change, not in individual man but in his association—in that interpenetration of man with nature which is neither man alone nor bare nature, but is a system of economic production, including on the one hand machines, plant, capital and cities, and on the other hand the social relations, science, art, law and culture which have been generated by this system. This system, although it is composed of units and of environment, has a history and a law of motion to be found in the analysis of the unit or the environment separately.

Thus it is that bare man, born into this system, becomes moulded by it and so changed in turn operates through the system on the environment and brings about further changes which are the basis of a new departure.

Ideas themselves can only be the product of such an existing organisation. Napoleon, Cæsar or Plato gets his language, the things he sees, his assumptions and desires, from engaging in social life, from being educated and living in a Greek city or Rome or Republican France.

That is not to say that ideas are a mere iridescence. On the contrary, it is precisely in Marxism that ideas become real things, being both caused and in turn creating an effect. Darwin's consciousness, being formed, undergoes its own

law of development and produces changes in the system in which he lives. Just as the environment, with indefinite potentialities-in-itself, reveals successively new, definite potentialities for man as a result of the evolution of technique, so bare man, with indefinite possibilities of consciousness, reveals a consciousness appropriate to the system in which he finds himself, either Melanesian or Athenian. Man's consciousness then is a real determining factor in history, but it is not man's consciousness that produces at each stage social organisation for economic production, but social organisation for economic production which produces man's consciousness. Being is prior to thinking, and we can easily see that this must be so, for all living organisms engage in activity which is not conscious activity, and this unconscious activity is phylogenetically and ontogenetically prior to conscious activity. Thus in the human body the sympathetic system acts unconsciously and is prior to and more fundamental than the more highly organised conscious activities. It is just because consciousness is subtle and richer that it is sequent to unconsciousness.

No analysis of society which aims to be really causal can take consciousness as prior, and write history in terms of man's desires and ideas. True, history is made partly by the conscious actions of men, and any causal explanation must include consciousness; but it must include consciousness as it develops historically, as an outcome of the development of economic production and the division of labour.

And although men's history-making actions are conscious and willed, the results by no means tally with the aims, but are in fact often quite other. Indeed this is the chief characteristic of the prehistoric stage of civilisation. How then can ideas play a causal rôle, in the sense that history is their realisation, when events contradict men's intentions? Only if, opposing the intentions, there is a kind

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of devil or evil force, and this ceases to be a causal explanation. If we take as primary the interpenetration of man with nature, of which ideas are the most refined product, we are then in a position to explain both the disasters and the successes of ideas, and to understand why men will and act as they do, and why their volition and actions produce the results we know. Living precedes ideas; and men must breathe and be fed to have them.

Because of the failure of the theory of consciousness as the causal explanation of history, an attempt was made by later idealists to make the cause of history, not ideas in the heads of men (conscious purposes) but ideas absolute and out of the heads of men. Certainly these absolute ideas outside the heads of men need no sustenance nor determining cause, but just because of that they furnish no causal explanation of history. Of these explanations by absolute ideas (fixed 'cycles of decay'; realisations of 'Hellenic and Faustian cultures') the best known and most consistent is Hegel's. Such an explanation is faced with the dilemma of admitting, either that these absolute ideas now exist really and that therefore evolution is at an end, or do not really exist, in which case causation is explained as the work of non-existents, and this is easily seen for the logical trick it is. Again, if these absolute ideas are real existents now, either in the past the absolute ideas existed or were later generated by the process of history. If the former, then how can reality and the ideas be in mutually-determining relation; if the latter, how can the ideas be the cause of that which has generated them?

In Spengler's crude form, or in the absurd form given it by Fisher (who explains bourgeois civilisation as the evolution of 'the ideal of liberty') absolute idealism shows itself even less adequate than with Hegel, and, as compared with

mechanical-materialism, is a mark of the increasing poverty of bourgeois thought.

Obviously the environmental 'explanation' of history corresponds to mechanical-materialism in bourgeois philosophy, with neo-Darwinism in biology, and with behaviourism in psychology. Similarly, the purposive 'explanation' corresponds to idealism in philosophy, neo-Lamarckianism in biology, and the instinct and hormic schools in psychology.

As these explanations by their own development expose their bankruptcy, there is regression to a kind of history which is believed to be a compromise, or synthesis, but which is in fact nothing but a confession of the breakdown of the culture producing it. This system has as its expression in philosophy, positivism or phenomenalism, but it is constantly being forced by its own contradictions into a confused eclecticism. How does this positivism appear in bourgeois history?

Positivism asserts that man's sole concern is with *sensa*, or phenomena. Since subject and object are, according to positivism, alike inaccessible (for the object is an unknowable thing-in-itself), *sensa* are the sole data of science and no true statements as to reality are possible. Laws are merely convenient summaries or lucky predictive accidents. Since the object is declared unknowable, the real ground of causality—the material basis of sensation—is eliminated. The world no longer possesses a unity due to its materiality, and *sensa* are connected in no causal way: anything *might* happen.

Of course such an attitude is a negation of science and in its pure form is hardly practicable. The subject or the object is in fact smuggled in illegitimately by some backdoor. For example, laws become convenient statements (Mach), or the world becomes the work of a mathematician (Jeans). In this way a spurious unity is given to some restricted field of

reality. A collection of such spurious unities not themselves unified, a farrago of mutually contradictory categories, becomes the content of science when any large domain of reality is surveyed. Thus positivism necessarily involves eclecticism.

This is visible in bourgeois history in two forms. First of all there is the monstrously detailed collection of facts, of inscriptions, pipe rolls, potsherds, and records of every description which become valued simply for their own sake, as if a sufficient accumulation of them would eventually in some mysterious way give birth to a history. This would be a correct assumption if such detail work were part of an ordered programme, had a method, or were carried out at the impulse of a general science of history with understood laws and a causal programme. Instead, it is like a curiosity shop; it is the collecting of detail for its own sake, and since the domain of history is all men's activities, the jackdaw accumulation of such facts can proceed indefinitely until not all the volumes of mankind could hold the records. No science of history, however, would have been produced even then, for it is the function of science to control and direct the collection of such facts now and, in this control and direction, to receive confirmation, negation or transformation. Such an accumulation, as long as it remains fundamentally unscientific, only adds to the confusion.

Men's opinions of events, however resurrected and authentic, do not form history, for we do not learn the characteristics of an epoch by learning the opinions of its members concerning it, any more than we learn the character of a man by his opinion of himself. We do not learn the laws of history's movement from the intentions of its units, for events, though produced by the conscious actions of men, do not realise their hopes. We learn these laws, as we learn those of the physiology of bodies and the evolution



of animals, by the objective study of what exists independent of consciousness, in the course of a development in which theory marches step by step with practice, and the observed fact at every stage must transform the theory. If no general theory applying to all men's activities exists, how can even the most minute study of the records of dead men's activities be of value?

History is an evolution, a change; and we can no more expect to derive the real pressure and being of a civilisation from its language and material surroundings at any stage than we could expect naked man, put into a deserted London, to become a modern Londoner. All social qualities derive from society in movement, inheriting capital and transforming it, and we cannot understand the congealed products of each stage—its records—without understanding the metabolism of the society that produced them. We might as soon attempt to recreate the appearance and habit of the fossil animal from his bones without a study of living organisms to-day.

The staggering accumulation of unrelated petty detail which is bourgeois history to-day, naturally produces attempts at organisation. These contradict the basic positivism of the approach, and have to be smuggled in illegitimately. These attempts are necessarily restricted to limited fields: one historian will explain Egyptian history as the product of Nilotic conditions; another will explain the decline of Greece in terms of malaria; a third will explain bourgeois history as the growth of the idea of liberty, a fourth will explain medieval history as the triumph of Christo-Roman conceptions of order; a fifth will explain the development of the human race as a result of mineral deficiency; a sixth will explain the diffusion of heliolithic culture by the attraction of gold deposits; a seventh will explain the growth of capitalist economy by the bringing back of bullion from

South America, and so on, endlessly. Faced with the task of explaining the whole domain of culture, the historian has no hesitation in combining Freudian, behaviouristic, diffusionistic, pathological, idealistic and materialistic explanations, even though their premises are mutually contradictory. How can such a mixture call itself history, if by history is understood any causal or scientific account of men's activities in Time?

But history, as a science, is history in the present. It is science separating the past as preserved in the present. No one can cognise the past directly. But this separation of the past from the present is in fact the function of all sciences, for in so far as the universe has a history, all sciences have as their task the understanding of how things come into being and are at each stage determined by their past. Thus, just as the foundation of biology is evolution and metabolism, so the foundation of physics is cosmogony and motion. Yet this study of the past of the domain of qualities proper to the science in question has one main end, that of discovering the law of motion of all qualities comprised in it, their passage from not-being into being and back again.

This law of motion is discovered with a purpose; for just as the discovery through cosmogony of the most universal laws of physics, and, through paleontology, of the most universal laws of life, taught men the structure of physics-now and life-now, so the discovery through history of the most universal laws of society teaches men the structure of society-now. But it does not rest there. There is passage not only to the past from the present but back again. Thus our knowledge of physiology and embryology is derived from paleontology, but then, equipped with knowledge derived from physiology, we turn with fresh understanding to those relics of the past which were the starting point of our researches. It is not a mere dialectic movement of *theory*.

The theory develops because at each stage it issues in active experiment and prediction: biology develops in experiments with organisms, in predictions of where and for what to look among fossils or evolutionary survivals; biology grows. Physics develops in experiments with bridges and engines, in predictions of what to look for in the field of space. Thus a science is always this separation out from the present of the past which, having being conserved in the present is different, and begets a dialectic antagonism which generates the future. This is merely the reflection in theory of what happens in reality, where the past is also preserved, by the conservation laws, in the present, and by a kind of polar tension produces the new.

But the two processes, the theoretical and the objective, do not run on 'in parallel'. They intermingle, for the theoretical is the reflex of the objective and at every stage is seen to be the result of a material movement. Theory is always transformed as the result of a practical, objective transaction. History therefore appears as the most vital of the sciences in this respect, that it is the study of the very movement of society which generates the other sciences and itself.

Thus history too cannot escape from the method and life of all other sciences, which is to separate the past from the present in the only way in which it can be separated, as a contradiction, as a negation, which is synthesised in the future. The past to history is all that is-not-here, all that is not-in-the-present, and yet we in the present are studying it now in the present; but because, hitherto unconscious of this past, we now become conscious of it, we are not what we were, we are changed, something new has come to be. The present is now something new; it is the future. All this is not theoretical; it takes place both in action and thought. That is what we mean when we say, 'The separation, as a nega-

tion, of the past from the present, begets the *negation of the negation*, the "past as seen by the present", which is the future.'

The process is not contemplative, it is active. The change can only be a real change if new consciousness is not a mere iridescence, but a real entity, determining and determined. In fact consciousness, in its full active realisation, is just such a real determining entity. New consciousness (new knowledge, theory, or hypothesis) can only come into being as the result of an action, an experiment, a contact with reality which negates existing consciousness and as the result of this tension produces new consciousness—a new theory, hypothesis, or system of knowledge. This is the method of individual sensation, but when dealing with categories of sensation socially valid and generally organised, it becomes the method of science.

It must equally be the method of history. History cannot seize hold of the past by a divine ingestion; it can only seize hold of the present in the past. It cannot extract a theory from the present by an undetermined, one-way contemplation; it can only do so by testing at each stage its historical theories in practice. Its historical theories are precisely its conscious formulations of man's destiny, purpose, and rôle. History is an analysis of all the statements about man that are made in his laws, his ethics, his art, his religion, his science, and his hopes, and it puts this analysis into practice by living according to them or alternatively by denying them and transforming them. Hence the science of history is part of the practical activity of living according to the social consciousness of an age or alternatively of rebelling against it and transforming it. Indeed this must be so, for if history deals with all man's activities—his hates, loves and hopes as well as his building and feeding—it cannot be separated from his loving, hating, building and feeding now: if history

is the theory of how he did these in the past, it cannot neglect the theory of how he does these in the present, and since science at every stage passes over into practice, it cannot neglect to undertake the confirmation or transformation of these activities now.

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This is not merely the method of sensation and science, it is the general method of man's living. Thus, when men begin to question in any age the contemporary theory of social relations embodied in their art, their science, their laws, their morality, their system of social distribution, status, and rights, then it is a sign that their practical experience has proved the defects, or 'errors', in the ideological system as a whole or in part; but it is also a sign that, given in the very facts of their experience which expose the falsity of this superstructure, is the outline of the new superstructure which will more adequately express their real concrete being. The transformation accomplished, being and thinking are both on a new level, are both transformed by the interaction and ready for a new development.

This then explains the *evolution* of society. The primary factor is concrete being: the actual production in which men engage more or less consciously and willingly but which, considered as a whole, is unconscious. This is the evolution of technique—associated men changing nature as step by step the necessities of nature progressively unfold in reciprocal contact with technique, so that each reflects the other and yet both change for each other. This is the massive basis of society, and just as man may only eat, or eat and think, but cannot only think, so this developing technique with all the division of labour and the sharpening differentiation and increasing complexity it produces, is not all conscious and in any case is never conscious in one head, but is

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accompanied on the one hand by plexi of unrelated desires, hopes and thoughts in individual heads which are born and die, and, on the other hand by shared desires, hopes and thoughts which endure in the form of language, scientific disciplines, art products, traditions, conventions, laws and moralities. The throwing up of these secondary products exerts in turn a final influence on the whole, but there is never any doubt as to which is prior.

Because laws, sciences, languages, arts, distribution systems, moralities and all the social relations and status arrangements connected therewith, are as it were the most generalised, the most social, the most recent, and the furthest removed from nature of all economic products, they form the superstructure or most abstract portion of history. They form the theory of human life, the consciousness of society, the visible flower of activity; but they grow from, are nourished by, and are a new aspect of living, breathing, working, active men. If men in the course of their interaction with nature, living practically as men in nature and in society, are faced with an objective fact that contradicts this social theory of life, a tension is generated which will ultimately bring about the appropriate modification of the superstructure. Moreover, because it is a social or shared superstructure, only those facts will bring about its modification which are capable of being made social facts, facts connected with man's relation as associated man to outer reality. We may say if we like that minor transformations of technique ultimately affect the whole superstructure. Or we may say with more detail that when associated men immediately in interaction with nature discover discrepancies between theory and practice, immediate detailed theory is modified accordingly—('technological improvement')—and as the minor discrepancies accumulate, theories more and more general or 'social' in scope are affected, until ultimately

the whole superstructure is modified—‘ideological development’.

This is the evolutionary theory of society, which holds good for all society that has any consciousness and is at grips with nature; but the two are the same—conscious man is socially productive man. This theory is therefore the basic theory of human society. It is the fundamental law of motion of history, and applies to all men’s theories and to all men’s activities. Necessarily, because it is a scientific theory, it sees history as still being made now and all men’s contemporary theories and activities as part of the science of history. History can only find the theoretical past in the theoretical present and can only develop the theoretical present by being active, and so producing the real future.

In the history of evolution, Marx also discovered revolution. He found, as a well-known objective fact, that instead of the superstructure being ‘always gradually, by small increments, remodelled by men’s daily activity, there were periods when the whole superstructure, as if with explosive force, was rapidly shattered and transformed. Laws, sciences, arts, rights, distribution systems—all were involved in one stupendous explosion, lasting for one or two centuries, like the slow motion film of a bursting bomb.

Now this could only mean one thing, that for some reason an insulating gap had opened between the superstructure (theory) and the basis (practice) so that practice could not continually modify theory. As a result the antagonism had grown and the tension had at last become so terrific that the resultant explosion had shattered almost every portion of the old superstructure. An obvious example was the bourgeois revolution which inaugurated the ‘modern era’.

But why (Marx asked) should revolutions be? Why should the superstructure show this rigidity, and permit an explosive antagonism to be generated in society?

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Marx's answer was one of the most revelatory hypotheses ever framed. *The antagonism is itself only a reflection in the ideological sphere of a fundamental division in production, and this division is expressed, in the sphere of social relations, by antagonistic classes, of which one class is the conscious, contemplative, directing, and therefore ruling class and the other is the unconscious, active, directed and ruled class.* Therefore the antagonism between conscious superstructure and active technique is an antagonism which reflects the division of society's economic production. One class directs economic production consciously and by so doing is able to direct the flow of the bulk of society's economic products into its life. The other class is directed and exploited. The directive, conscious class is the class that produces the consciousness of society: *the superstructure is the product of the exploiting class.*

But the exploited class is the class that performs the actual labour; it is the class which is directly at grips with nature; it is the class which handles the productive forces of society. The ruling class only came into being because its members performed a socially useful function, by directing labour they increased the productive efficiency of society as a whole. The first stages of such a class society are therefore an increase in productive forces because of the new class structure. The society flourishes.

But as the society develops the class antagonism develops. There is a growing division between thinking and acting, between the exploiters and exploited. Theory flies apart from practice; the ruling class become less functional, and more parasitic, contemplative and idealistic, and the exploited class more and more become the sole controllers of the productive forces of society at the same time as they become more and more divorced from its products. The productive forces as they develop indicate the increasing



technical power of man and his increasing practical experience of reality, but since the productive forces are the domain of the exploited, and the theory or superstructure is the creation of the exploiting class, there is only generated a growing antagonism between theory and practice, evident in an increasing divorce of man's professions from reality, and of the outward forms of society from its true content. There is an increase in exploitation, in the parasitical rôle of the exploiting class, and a growing contradiction between what man could do and what he is actually doing. Man thinks fine things and does hateful ones. He is 'sinful', base, and degenerate, at the very time when his notions are most high-falutin.

This antagonism cannot but continue to develop, for every growth in productive forces exposes the faults of the superstructure and, at the same time, makes the non-productive class cling more closely to it. The superstructure now becomes transformed through the necessities of maintaining the class division which begot it, and it becomes transformed into a class-fortress and base for reaction, counter-revolution and Fascism—thus adding to the bitterness of the struggle. Revolution occurs when the exploited class, operating the productive forces of society, revolts and shatters the whole superstructure that crippled it.

This revolt is not a blind shattering. The exploited class, in control of the productive force, has by its very development of those forces learned the new technique which negates the superstructure of the exploiting class. Because theory and practice have got into antagonistic hands, each development of productive forces could not transform the superstructure in an evolutionary manner, but these developments accumulated until they attained explosive force. Thus, by the time a revolutionary situation has matured, there is a whole new superstructure latent in the exploited

class, arising from all they have learned from the development of productive forces, and this becomes the starting point for the superstructure of the new society, which therefore is one which starts on a higher plane than that of the overthrown society. This is the creative rôle of revolutions. It is shown clearly in the bourgeois revolution, where the exploited class of the towns, the bourgeoisie, because of the development as productive forces of bourgeois private property, overthrew the feudal regime with its superstructure based on status or degree, and established one based on private property.

The proletarian revolution is a consequence of the increasing antagonism between bourgeois superstructure and proletarian labour, and when the crippling by the superstructure of the productive forces—visible in slumps, poverty, war and unemployment—grows unbearable, not only does the proletariat revolt but the very technical developments which increased its productivity—social organisation of production *inside* the unit—also generates the ideology which transforms the capitalist superstructure. The proletarian superstructure is, long before the revolution in Russia, already extant in embryo in the form of Marxism or scientific socialism, and this is in turn the product of the analysis by Marx of capitalist production. In this analysis of the past history of society in contemporary capitalism, he saw the new productive forces made possible by the proletarianisation of labour, and only realisable in communism.

Thus Marx was able to answer the question as to why the superstructure becomes detached from the foundations, and society is rent in twain. It is the result of a class cleavage. He was able to show that these classes themselves only arose as a development of special forms of production—the slave with agricultural production, the bourgeois with feudal production, and the proletarian with capitalist production; and

he was able also to show how the transformation of the superstructure, the accompaniment of revolution, was not an arbitrary shattering, but the realisation in new social relations of possibilities already latent in practice.

The same analysis answers our original question, why the bourgeois sciences, for all their achievement, are unable to create a synthetic ideology but by their very development bring about the disintegration of bourgeois culture. Sciences are ultimately in empirical contact with reality; they have a technical, practical basis. This differentiates science from mere theory. This practical basis is the front, as it were, along which science advances, and the new matter it encounters should travel up to the superstructure and modify it. But, as we have seen, the superstructure or 'world-view' of a culture is the creation of a ruling class which becomes increasingly divorced from practice, increasingly self-illusory and non-functional. An antagonism therefore arises between this central ideology and the advancing practical front of science, which results in a crippling and distortion of science in proportion as it becomes generalised, and approaches wide theoretical formulations. As a result science is repelled by the central ideology, and gathers itself round its most practical fronts which thus become closed worlds—detached and isolated sciences. This has as a further result the separation of the world-view from the sciences, with its ensuing collapse and disintegration, and the impoverishment of the now isolated, separate sciences.

Since classes are not arbitrary absolute creations, but come into being as specific developments of economy, they are by no means inevitable. The exploitation relationship is not essential to society, and Marx showed that the proletariat in fact occupied the special historical position of the class destined to end classes, to bring about its own extinction as a class.

Since the bourgeoisie, once expropriated, has no social status, it must cease to exist, and then the coercive content of the State superstructure vanishes. Only one class is left—that is to say, there are no classes—and this class both owns and operates the productive forces of society. There is no longer a fundamental cleavage between theory and practice, which now can affect each other directly and rapidly, and each innovation in practice can at once affect the superstructure.

Such a conception of history not only exposed the fundamental law of motion of social men, but it also reinstated history as a science like other sciences, that is, one in which practice is the ally of theory and *vice-versa*. No more than it is possible to separate the science of chemistry from laboratory experiments, or that of cosmogony from physical experiments, is it possible to separate history, which is the apex of the sciences, from social activity. History then becomes, not merely a study of inscriptions and records and witnesses, but the means of answering questions which were in olden days phrased in such symbolic forms as: 'What is my duty to my neighbour?' 'What is man's destiny?' 'Why is Truth independent of me?' 'What is the worth of Beauty?' 'What must I do to be saved?' 'Is Evil real?' History becomes, just because it is the study of the past in the present, the guide to the future. Since future history is made only by the present actions of men, as they realise themselves, such a history must necessarily be a guide to action now. And each such action, by establishing or modifying or enriching the content of the science of history, also increases its penetrative power in analyses of the past, and enables it with increasing success to separate the past from that present in which the past is implicit.

Thus Marx and Engels not only explained the movement of history, they also made history real and scientific by

making it a guide to man's action in relation to society now. Because we, in a bourgeois world, live in a time when the superstructure of the bourgeois class cripples the productive powers of organised labour, historical materialism is a guide to our action in changing this superstructure and participating in the proletarian revolution. Of course it is just this in Marxism that scandalises the bourgeoisie—it is an historical *science*, and is therefore warm and breathing. Historical materialism is not a mere dead congelation of knowledge of the past, as if the past were something separate from the present and outside it, or as if the social activities of all men who went before us were altogether external to us, instead of being forces in a movement of which we are the momentary apex and culmination. It is the past active in the present and aiding man actively to produce the future.

#### IV

## CONSCIOUSNESS

### *A Study in Bourgeois Psychology*

#### 1

IT is characteristic of bourgeois psychology that it is confused and inconclusive in its treatment of what would seem, to many people, the most important subject of psychological study, consciousness. Bourgeois psychology has a choice between six doctrines about consciousness, and it will throw light on the difficulties with which that psychology is faced if we detail them:—

(a) Consciousness contains the sole data of psychology (philosophical and faculty psychologies).

(b) Consciousness is an epiphenomenon accompanying neurological activity (neurological psychology and psychophysiology).

(c) Consciousness plays no causal part in behaviour, which can be completely described and determined without its use. Since behaviour is the only thing that can be observed in others, the existence of consciousness should on principles of epistemology be denied (behaviourism).

(d) The psyche consists of the products of one or a number of transformed instincts; some of these products are conscious, others are unconscious (Freudism and its derivatives; and 'hormic' psychology).

(e) Consciousness consists of the shuffling of forms of thought according to dynamical laws (association psychology and gestalt psychology).

(*f*) In so far as any or all of the above theories produce empirically-proven results, they are right (eclectic or academic psychology).

It sounds a hopeless muddle, and in fact it is a muddle without hope as long as psychologists move within the circle of bourgeois philosophy. Yet would anyone familiar with contemporary psychology accuse me of overstating the case? It is in fact usual to provide many more classifications: for example a gestalt psychologist would insist on being separated from the old-fashioned associationist and the Freudian from the adherent of McDougall, and the follower of Jung or Adler from both.

It is obvious that all these schools cannot be right. For example (*a*) and (*c*) also (*d*) and (*e*) are exclusive opposites. It is as near certain as anything can be that none of them is right. There is no more depressing spectacle in bourgeois culture to-day than this of a science so important and vital to human knowledge as psychology unable to secure agreement about the most elementary feature of its domain. But may not this be a necessary feature of psychology itself which perhaps, as some scientists have suggested, can never be a science; and is not this more likely than that the failure of its psychology should be a necessary characteristic of bourgeois culture?

The answer is, that not only is the anarchy of psychology a necessary feature of bourgeois culture, but that the very attitude of mind which supposes that psychology can never be a science, is itself an outcome of the same fundamental position. Bourgeois psychology grew out of biology through the influence of physiology on philosophy; but equally bourgeois physics affects it, for it determines on the one hand bourgeois philosophy and on the other hand bourgeois biology. Medicine, too, throws its contribution into psychology through physiology, and it is chiefly philosophical

medicine, medicine formulated in terms of the current bourgeois philosophy.

Does this sound an inextricable tangle, accounting for the confusion of psychology, the latest of the empirically developed sciences? It does so only because the bourgeois sciences, as an outcome of the bourgeois position, cannot be conceived except as either confusing or dominating each other. Either the fundamental categories of 'the sciences' are held to be exclusive, and nothing can result from their combination except a mish-mash, *or*, alternatively, one science excludes and suppresses the categories of the others, as in behaviourism, the categories of bourgeois biology are allowed to suppress those proper to psychology, and in mechanical materialism the categories of bourgeois physics are allowed to usurp those of all other spheres of science. *Either* the spheres of the positive sciences are distinct, *or* they are the same, that is the dilemma which bourgeois science has posed for itself, and it can never imagine that they are different and yet mutually determinative.

The bourgeois, by his fundamental position, is free 'in himself'. He is free not because he is conscious of his causality, but because he is ignorant of the social causes that determine his being. He pictures himself therefore as standing in a dominating relation to his environment, just as in society he seems by his dominating relation to capital and his ownership of social labour power, to be determining society and not determined by it.

He is in fact deluded, for his ownership of capital does not enable him consciously to determine society even though his actions determine its fate. The sum of bourgeois wills produces history, but it is not the history any one bourgeois willed. His efforts for one thing produce another thing—his attempts at profit produce loss, at plenty poverty, at peace war. As his culture collapses all his efforts to shore it



up hasten that collapse. He finds himself unfree after all, although he is 'in control' of social forces.

Why then was he unfree? Where did he err? He erred because he did not see that his dominating relation to society was a determining relation, which determined him as much as he determined it. He was unconscious of this, and therefore unable to achieve freedom. His conception of freedom really arose as a special case of a group of illusions about domination which has been associated with all forms of society based on dominating classes. This group of illusions has for a common factor the belief that domination secures self-determination. But it follows from the material unity of the Universe that this is untrue. All the phenomena that constitute the Universe are mutually determined. If any group were completely self-determined it would constitute a closed world, and would not exist. All relations are determining. The earth appears to primitive man to dominate the cosmos—sun and stars appear to rotate round it. This is a pleasant illusion, but it does not make us astronomers, much less does it make us people round whom the cosmos revolves. As soon as we realise there is a determining relation, and become conscious of its nature and how it grips us, we are that much freer of cosmic phenomena, and can predict eclipses, construct sidereal time, navigate, and govern our actions according to the necessity of the Universe.

All previous cultures that were ideologically conscious at all have been based on a ruling class which consciously dominated and directed the utilisation of productive forces. As a result all such cultures were subject to an illusion distorting their ideologies. Slave-owning culture conceived freedom to consist in this, in the domination of the will of one man over the will of another, the other passively obeying this one's will. This gives rise to the *teleological*

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explanation of the Universe, which reaches its subtlest form in Plato's or Aristotle's philosophies, in which all phenomena are determined by Ideas or Forms. These correspond to the plans formed in the mind of the slave-owner which his slave passively fulfils. This explanation applies equally to social and non-social phenomena, and therefore is consistent. The domination inherent in the slave-owning system is not repressed, as with the bourgeois, but is conscious, and the illusion consists, not in supposing that no domination exists, but that society is in fact really determined solely by the will of the master, and does not in turn determine his will. This will, which therefore appears as the first cause in society just because it is conscious, also appears the first cause in the Universe, as the Law of the Universe, as the doctrine of Ends, Final Causes, Perfect Ideas (willed by one or more supreme causes or Divine Masters) whose plans the Universe fulfils and thus develops.

Society is not in fact determined by the will of a slave-owning master, but by the productive forces at the service of such an economy. The master's will is itself determined by the society in which he finds himself and, just because he is unconscious of these causes, the slave-owner is unfree. His world of ends is inadequate, not only as a basis for sociology, but also for physics, biology and psychology. It cannot exhibit true causal relations: only demons disguised as final causes. The slave-owning world, incapable of being deeply scientific or analytical, inevitably marches on to the Empire, whose fiction it is that the whole Empire's activity is controlled by the will of one master, the Emperor. And this Empire as inevitably marches on to ruin, for the productive forces are not controlled by the will of the Emperor but instead, crippled by slave-owning productive relations, the Imperial economy decays for all his efforts, and it is a world whose income has steadily diminished, whose

soil is impoverished and whose people is demoralised, that crumbles at any push from the barbarians so easily repelled at the height of the Empire's power.

No less than the slave-owning, the feudal civilisation is in the grip of the illusion of dominion. The dominion is still conscious, as it is in slave-owning civilisation, and therefore necessarily gives rise to a physics and to a world-view in which all causes are final causes—conscious purposes in the mind of a dominating master. In this respect it simply takes over Aristotelianism, the most consistent expression of slave-owning philosophy. But now this domination is regarded as necessarily exercised according to a hierarchy of privilege; the day of unrestricted property in slaves is over. The dominating relation is exercised 'according to law', and this law itself is only the reflection of the Roman technical apparatus of learning, social organisation, and administrative skill taken over with the Church from the Empire by the barbarian overlords. This technical apparatus becomes symbolised as Christendom, as the monopoly of the Church, as benefit of clergy, as an instrument which must be used to sanction all acts of domination from kingship to knighthood. Aristotelianism must therefore be modified: and while final causes are still the explanatory mechanism these final causes are, in Scholasticism and Thomism, causes which are established by a law of God, which can only work themselves out according to a fiat given forth at the Creation. The world works according to God-sanctioned laws which have a purpose, and have had a purpose from the beginning of time. These laws are not self-driving, but require the continual impetus of deity. They can therefore be suspended at any time by the Divine Will, but such miracles are rare.

Science therefore in feudal civilisation is still in embryo but it is yet a stage nearer birth than in slave-owning society.

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A dominion which, in addition to the free will of the master, requires also the sanction of the impersonal law, is already well on the way to be determined, even if it is determined from above by another dominating will—God's. A world ruled by law is well on the way to being a world ruled by causality.

In a sense this is an accident. Feudal law is only the Imperial law of slave-owning society preserved through the survival of Roman economy in the monastery-farm, example to the barbarian of agricultural efficiency and therefore the ancestor of the manor. But the fact of this survival changes it. In Roman society, law's sanction is simply this, that it expresses the will of the Divine Emperor, who owns his people like a slave-owner. To medieval society, to the barbarian invader, law comes as something outside the will of the ruler, as an impersonal and pre-existing body of law, as Christendom, with which he must comply if the social production from which he draws tribute is to be carried on, for that production functions according to these laws, and otherwise collapses in anarchy. The law therefore appears, not as a fiat of any serf-owner's will but as something determining in some measure the range of will of both serf and serf owner, a something existent from the beginning of time. Hence feudal society provides the necessary transition to the bourgeois position.

This transition is achieved within the limits of its own illusion by bourgeois culture. The scholastic world laws are stripped of their final causes and become self-driving, while the question of the reason for and time of their issue by the Creator is postponed or treated as outside the province of science. Science is thus conceived for the first time as the field of laws which connect phenomena in a mutually determining way, and are sufficiently explained by exhibiting the structure of that determinism. These laws do not

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require as their sanction a final cause nor a clearly expressed divine *place in the cosmos* and do not therefore explain nature as the vehicle of conscious wills exercising dominion.

This ought to be the death of animism. Animism is nothing but the attribution to nature, as the sufficient cause of all phenomena, of human wills, due to the primitive's illusion that the will is a freely determining cause in itself, and not in the act of willing itself determined. In primitive communism, where there is no domination or division of labour, such wills seem present in every individual freely determining his behaviour as a cause, and therefore by analogy they are held to play the same part in the beneficent or maleficent activities of trees, stones, and stars, which obey their own wills without overlords. But the slave-owner is well aware that though the slave may will as he please, the slave's will is not the cause of the slave's activities, which are caused by his master's will. He therefore subtilises animism to this extent, that trees and stones have not wills of their own, but are passive subjects to a god's will:

From haunted spring, and dale  
Edg'd with poplar pale,  
The parting Genius is with sighing sent,  
With flowre-inwov'n tresses torn  
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets  
mourn.

So early Greek animism, with the development of its economy, gives place to the teleology of Aristotle.

The slave-owner is at times visited with a nightmare. He finds that his free will, in spite of its freedom, is thwarted, not by a superior will but by things-in-themselves—by inferior wills, accidents, mistakes, and his own ignorance. Yet he is still unable to conceive his will except as being thwarted like that of his slave's by another will, and since he

the master is so thwarted, might not even the world's master and his—God Himself—be thwarted in his volition by some grand over-riding will, by Will-in-Itself? This is the slave-owning conception of Moira, or Fate, a comparatively late development reaching its noblest expression in Greek tragedy. This Fate, in spite of its closeness to bourgeois determinism, betrays its slave-owning parentage by the fact that it is always visualised as a consciously forseeing Will, and always as thwarting, not determining human wills *as well as* events, but *interfering* with human wills *by means of* events.

Animism, slave-owning teleology and Fate, feudal teleology and Law, these then are the steps by which society in its development explains the world. It was the rôle of the bourgeois to carry a step forward, not only society's productive development but also and necessarily also its explanation of the Universe.

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The bourgeois first finds himself as one of a class whose development is restricted by feudal privilege and the reign of law imposed by Christendom. He therefore revolts against it and, in the circumstances in which he finds himself, he necessarily formulates his case as follows:—

(i) The dominating relations of one man over another are evil, and must be eliminated, for they hold up productive forces (that is, the productive forces of my class).

(ii) Law is not something immutable existing from the beginning of time and imposed on men from without. Any such imposed law is wrong. A man's law is in himself. What seems to him in the given circumstances best or proper to do, is right, and there should be no other law.

This means that the bourgeois turns Catholic dogma into personal Protestantism, and that all feudal laws, monopolies,

or privileges which restrict his doing what seems best to himself, are abolished in the course of his revolution. Those restrictive laws are, however, all laws interfering with his right to acquire, alienate and own capital. He does not however regard this right as a 'law', but as something given in the nature of things, and in his own nature.

The bourgeois thus emerges to consciousness as a man whose views of the world are determined by social causes, just like the slave-owner or lord. Freedom consists in this, in each man's doing what seems best to himself, consulting, not some good laid down by law like the service to his overlord by which the feudal landowner held his land, but his own good. Out of this apparent confusion of personal competition will emerge (according to the bourgeois) a world-order that is the best possible, because it is the product of freedom. To this illusion the bourgeois is completely committed by his revolutionary programme.

But as I explained elsewhere,\* this society, in spite of its apparent individual freedom, is still based on a dominating relation. The bourgeois as the source of uncontrolled free activity in society, must necessarily be uncontrolled in his ownership of social capital. This apparently innocent dominating relation to a thing also involves, after all, dominion over men, just as in previous societies, but unlike the ruling class in previous societies the bourgeois cannot consciously assert dominion over other wills as a law of society; on the contrary he is committed to repress the knowledge or deny the existence of such a law. Moreover the very dominion thus exercised imposes a conflict in society between the haves and have-nots, which would become overt and suicidal to society if it were not forcibly repressed and kept harmless, not once and for all, but as

\* V. 'Pacifism and Violence' in *Studies in a Dying Culture*.

long as the antagonising domination exists, which is as long as culture remains bourgeois.

Thus after a bourgeois revolution, the resultant strife is suppressed by a 'strong man' who forcibly imposes a coercive law on haves and have-nots alike, making possible unrestricted capitalism. In English history this strong man is, after the bourgeois Reformation, the Tudor monarch, and, after the Revolution, Cromwell. In France he is Napoleon. But this 'strong man', though necessary, is by bourgeois standards himself an anomaly, and as soon as he has called into being laws protecting bourgeois rights, he is eliminated in favour of a rubber stamp monarch (the Glorious Revolution of England) or a President (France) and the bourgeois task then becomes simply the preservation of this body of law in its main principles (the constitution, democracy, etc.) with the incorporation of such minor amendments as social development renders necessary (legislation). These laws are now hypostatized as the essence of liberty and justice (freedom and parliamentary democracy).

How is this change reflected in the world of science, with which we are concerned? The world of science follows the same course. The first attempt at a bourgeois world-view as homogeneous as that of Aristotle or Thomas Aquinas necessarily fails from the outset by reason of this split in the bourgeois position. Either classicism or feudalism can achieve a homogeneous world-view in a far more consistent anticipation of Schopenhauer's philosophy: the 'World as Will and Idea' (or rather, as Will and *Aim*). And, unlike Schopenhauer's, such a world-view expresses in a refined form the viewpoint of all thinking men in that culture. This the bourgeois never achieves.

He is divided between two contradictory points of view. In himself he is exempt from determinism, not because of



the dominating relation of his class to society (as with classical society) but through the absence of any conscious relation to other men at all. Other men neither dominate him nor are dominated by him (he thinks), and the ideal society, to which all bourgeois strive, is one in which each unit is insulated, and the world of society and of values drives on in the best possible way as the result of the independent, self-motivated action of every free bourgeois.

At the same time he stands, as owner and master of social capital, in a dominating relation to 'Nature', his environment. Social capital is the crystallisation of men's attempts to control nature through their empirical knowledge of its causality. He is in charge of this manipulation of nature, but this is not a relation of will like that of classical society, for the bourgeois by his position is committed to the belief that a dominating relation to a thing (private property) is not a dominating relation at all. It is therefore a relation in which will does not enter in the sense that to will a thing is to have the slave do it if it is do-able, and if not—well, slaves are not perfect and it is not for the master to do the slave's business for him. It is a new kind of relation in which the bourgeois as it were 'administers' a thing, so as to draw out from its intrinsic qualities the maximum benefit to society, which, in bourgeois language, appears translated as 'the maximum profit to himself'. Of course he is not really administering property, he is exploiting labour power.

Unlike the classic or feudal position, such a position is from the outset self-contradictory, and will never be able to generate a consistent world-view; dualism is implicit in it. For from the bourgeois point of view, in the world of society freedom seems to inhere in the individual will unconscious of any causality or outer necessity; but in the world of nature, freedom seems to inhere in the drawing-out by the will of the necessary qualities in Nature and, therefore, in

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consciousness of the necessity of Nature. The first view is completely fallacious; but the second is nearer reality than a teleological explanation, and therefore bourgeois culture is culture which gives birth for the first time to a science of the environment of nature, a thing almost unknown to previous cultures. Nonetheless, the fundamental fallacy of this position means that increasing success in the second, or scientific, world-view will add to the inconsistency and anarchy of the first; and ultimately the second world-view will itself become affected, for both are only abstractions from the one reality.

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We have in other essays explored different aspects of the disintegration of bourgeois science; here we merely concentrate on the duel between physics and psychology. The bourgeois looked round on his social world and unconsciously projected it into the world of physics, into his environment. He therefore discovered new truths about his environment, for the world of society is a part of reality. But, coming back to society, he could not, because the projection was unconscious, see society as determined in the way the world of physics was determined, for to do so would be to make social necessity conscious. He stood in his own light. As a bourgeois he had been unconscious of any necessity determining his action, for the bourgeois law for social action is 'Do as you will'. It forgets to state whether (a) you *can* do as you will; (b) you can *will* what you will.

Hence the world of physics, in which the 'wills' of the particles are determined at first by God but later by the relations of the particles themselves, would have been the basis of an accurate view of bourgeois society, but the bourgeois was unable to achieve it. He kept on getting near it, but

always this fundamental conviction that his will and desires were the source of social motion prevented it. If on the one hand he saw society as a network of determining relations and, on the other hand, his own mind as determined by this, he would have seen that not only did society produce from its interaction 'laws of supply and demand', but that his conceptions of justice and right were also determined by society. But this last step he could never make, for to him his own self was the source of the free energy which, interacting with bourgeois society, gave rise to economic law.

This failure meant that he conceived his desires and notions of justice, morality and so forth, as not in any way determined, but as primary and therefore eternal. Necessarily, the type of society of which these were the outcome was the eternal type of society—any deviation was either discredited or was an accident.

This results in three different worlds which are of major importance in understanding the distortion of bourgeois thought.

(i) *The world of physics.* This world, modelled on bourgeois society unconsciously grasped in experience by the bourgeois, is a world of particles trading freely with each other and giving rise to laws of supply and demand which dictate the behaviour of the world as a whole. Because nature is not a dominated slave, but an administered thing, it is non-living and non-mental: a-teleological therefore and stripped of all quality.

It is a closed world, which does not interact with the bourgeois, who surveys it to learn its laws and sue it like a machine—hence it is in absolute space and time, independent of the observing mind. In order that it should not be in determining relation with mind, it is by definition bare of all qualities found in mind (the so-called sensory or secondary qualities). But these ultimately are found to include *all*

material qualities. Consequently the bourgeois closed world of physics, by definition restricted to matter, which matter is defined as 'non-mind', becomes barer and barer of real qualities until 'nothing' is left. But something must be left—there are the concepts that describe the 'structure' of this nothing. Thus mechanical materialism by its very premises is pushed on to become its apparent opposite, mentalism, which it reaches with Mach, Eddington, Jeans, and their followers.

The closed world of matter, restricted to non-mental qualities, is bound to collapse. 'Pure' physics is bound to reveal itself as an illusion. This it does by flying into two contradictory halves. On the one hand absolute space and time, independent of the observer, is saved by fusing them (space-time) and using the elaborate apparatus of the tensor to eliminate the determining effect of the observer and close the world by making it 'invariant for all transformations'. On the other hand this is flatly contradicted by quantum mechanics, which is composed partly of matrices of *observations alone*, partly of waves in absolute time-space which *are not however waves of matter* but waves indicating the *probability* of matter being present. In both cases matter is supposed to lurk behind the numbers as an unknowable Ding-an-sich.

(ii) *The closed world of sociology.* Here, once again, the bourgeois surveys a world from outside, and since his mind is not determined by it, though he lives in it, the social concepts in his mind are eternal (the laws of appetite, supply and demand, justice, free trade, etc.). These concepts therefore function in the world of sociology as laws regulating the free clash of individuals, and not as products of certain stages of that clash. Consequently, as in the famous mercantile examples, if two men meet on a desert island, their transactions strangely enough always and inevitably

produce bourgeois economics, and this is taken as a proof of the validity of the bourgeois concepts. It follows from this that although the bourgeois can give a fairly accurate picture of contemporary sociology, it is a static picture, and neglects the vital laws of motion. Pigou can seriously devote a book to 'The Economics of a Stationary State'. Hence—not only is all bourgeois economics false as a science, and therefore as a guide to prediction and action, but it cannot give a deterministic and causal picture of the development of society in all its varieties of culture. Thus the closed world of bourgeois sociology is far less accurate than the closed world of physics. Both are absolute, but whereas in the history of man the environment does not to any degree alter, society itself alters rapidly, and thus bourgeois culture precludes itself from writing a scientific history of any feature of its culture from economics to religion. Yet change manifestly occurs and therefore some force must be invoked from an outside world to produce these changes. On the one hand ludicrously simple causes from spheres anterior to the sociological will be brought in as sufficiently explanatory—climatic changes, racial differences, differential birthrate dietetic deficiencies (Marett), or, on the other hand, causes from spheres posterior to the sociological will be used in explaining the change—great Ideas, the invention of steam, the concept of liberty (H. A. Fisher), a cycle of flourishing and decay (Spengler). Both forms of explanation are equally unscientific but are preferred by the bourgeois to admitting that he is unconsciously determined by social relations, and that the 'fundamental' categories he has carefully established for sociology, are simply the product of his own particular phase of social relations.

(iii) *The closed world of psychology.* It was inevitable that the bourgeois should excel himself when he came to establish the categories of his own mind. The closed world

of psychology is as it were the antithesis of the closed world of physics. Now if we abstract from mind all 'material' qualities we travel the reverse road to bourgeois physics and we end up with something that contains no qualities at all. That is to say, consciousness is 'nothing'. But mind exists and the brain exists, therefore mind is simply physical matter in its sensory aspects, *the behaviour of the body*. Thus whilst in physics the bourgeois recipe for matter, 'not mind,' was producing a matter so stripped of all material qualities as to evaporate into mind (cp. Eddington, Jeans and Russell), in psychology the bourgeois recipe for mind, 'not-matter,' was producing a mind so stripped of all mental qualities that it solidified into matter, and became behaviourism. These two doctrines, so apparently opposed, produce each other, and follow from the one bourgeois position.

Before this, however, the bourgeois standpoint had succeeded in generating all the other distortions of psychology we have listed at the beginning of this essay. The simplest bourgeois position is that, since mind is not determined and is therefore free, the laws of the mind can only be studied in its products. But to consciousness, mind's products are all conscious products. Only the world of consciousness exists for psychology and, by this definition, psychology is the study not merely of non-material but of 'non-unconscious' qualities of the mind.

The first attempts at this form of bourgeois psychology are systematic. They are merely the classification of conscious phenomena (Faculty psychology). Since the psychological field is undetermined there is no reason why faculties should not be anything, and as a result they are merely subsumed according to the prejudices of the moment and the structure of language at the time.

But it is impossible by reason of the very nature of knowledge that any field can be depicted as indetermined

within itself, for every positive statement must necessarily express some kind of determinism. The most the bourgeois position claims is that mental phenomena are, in their own sphere, self-determined. The next step from faculty psychology is therefore the study of the self-determination of psychological products. The bourgeois, freely wandering about the world he dominates, acquires images of it or ideas, and these interact and live their lives, and combine and move by virtue of causal laws, parallel to but different from those that rule the world of particles in the closed world of physics. This closed world of Ideas, foreshadowed in Locke, reaches its final development in the associationists, with whom everything is explained by the 'association of ideas'. It still represents an important influence in all modern psychologies, for it appears to solve the problem of the closed worlds by creating two parallel worlds, quite in the manner of Descartes.

But unfortunately biology, itself a closed world, here erupts to shatter this dream of the parallel worlds, one of physics in which particles move according to physical laws, and the other of conscious ideas in which images of the real world move according to mental 'laws'. Biology, in human physiology, discovers a connecting link breaking into both worlds. On the one hand the body is composed of particles subject to physical laws, on the other hand, as aphasia and cerebral injuries show, disturbance of particles of the body leads to a disturbance of 'ideas'. The two absolute worlds must be joined.

This is the function of neurology. To neurology, however delicately its practisers may veil their position, the nerves (and particularly the cerebral neurones) are subject to electrical disturbances or waves of potential variation as the result of stimuli, and these waves are accompanied by ideas, just as the passage of an electric current across two

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poles in the atmosphere is accompanied by a spark. Great success is achieved by neurology in its correlation of conscious with physiological phenomena.

In this way mind is forced into the closed world of physics. The particles still move about in absolute time and space (for few, if any, neurologists have advanced to Einstein's absolute time-space) but now their movements are accompanied by a kind of iridescence or glow, which is mind.

The closed world of physics is a world dominated by the bourgeois, viewing it from outside and therefore able to foresee, by a Divine Calculation, the whole course of future movements of particles. This is bourgeois *predeterminism*, in which the whole future can be imagined as consciously known in its necessary future evolution, like the movements of a machine, just as in slave-owning fatalism the whole future can be imagined as consciously planned. In the former case the necessity arises from the causality of things; in the latter from the will of the planner; but in both cases the predestination consists in the conscious pre-knowledge of events.

But if consciousness itself is—as it evidently is—a late development of the Universe, such a conception falls to the ground. And if mind is also part of the network of determinism, each act of knowing involved in consciousness plays a determining as well as a determined rôle, and the mere fact of being all-knowing like Laplace's divine calculator, would involve a new determining force not allowed for in the original act of knowledge.

To the bourgeois the world of physics has its lines laid down irrespective of mind; it exists *absolutely*. When facts force him to include mind in this already complete, self-driving world, it is therefore simply dragged round with the machinery. Mind becomes pointless and redundant. What the bourgeois thought was the 'ennoblement' of mind—its



separation as a distinct thing from gross matter—is in fact its degradation, for now it becomes involved in the mindless causality of bourgeois physics, a causality abstracted of mental qualities, though consciously envisaged as a whole by impersonal Mind. Consciousness is to this abstract Mind an irrelevant phenomenon arising from the predetermined clash of particles.

Nothing could in fact be more repugnant to the bourgeois than this logical outcome of his contradictory position. Therefore bourgeois causality, or predeterminism (the only form of determinism he understands), is the bourgeois nightmare, and it induces him to lead an attack in full force on determinism or causality in physics (Jeans, Eddington, Weyl, Born, *et al*). It leads him at last to picture, by whatever immoral stratagem, the movements of the particles as indetermined; and the particles themselves as unknowable. This he supposes, at last secures his menaced free-will. But in fact free-will does not lie along this road at all.

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Thus the neurological approach is the most fruitful to-day in scientific results, yet it is also the most destructive to bourgeois psychology and bourgeois self-esteem. Mind is a material quality, and therefore all mental phenomena are necessarily phenomena displayed by material neurones. But by 'matter' the neurologist does not understand real sensuous matter, for he is a bourgeois physicist, and moreover in most cases a Newtonian bourgeois physicist. He only understands matter as it appears in the bourgeois closed world of physics, stripped of mental qualities, a completely self-determined world excluding mind as expressing a determining relation. Therefore neurological data, growing in certainty and precision, seem more and more to dissolve psychology into something non-mental and predetermined,

until we are ready to believe consciousness is an unimportant illusion. This is necessarily so, for a method of approach that sees colour, for example, as an hallucination, the *real* thing being a wave length, must even more see consciousness as an illusion, the real thing being a moving wave of potential. Thus bourgeois consciousness, in all seriousness (with maudlin regret even) denies its own existence, or, alternatively, if this 'daring' view seems dangerous, as easily and from the same fundamental position, denies the existence of anything else *but* consciousness.

Neurology, like early faculty and associationist psychologies, at first sees the problem in its simplest terms—consciousness or mind on the one hand, and on the other hand the physico-physiological world or matter. The categories of both are regarded as eternal.

Nonetheless, various considerations operate to make this simple dualism more complex. In the field of faculty or associationist psychology there is the problem of memory. Ideas vanish and then return (recollection) and return perhaps changed. But they must have been somewhere meanwhile. Where were they stowed? The answer is 'In the Unconscious'. Needless to say, this is at present no answer. To answer the question 'Where are Ideas when they are not-conscious?' with 'In the not-consciousness' is childish. However, if new laws of the process governing not-consciousness are learned, the answer is the starting point of research, and in modern psychology the Unconscious does therefore mean something.

Neurology is not perplexed by the problem in this form. Ideas, being a chance glow, can come or go, no explanation is needed. The problem here arises in a somewhat different form.

(a) The cortex and (b) the thalamus, the cerebellum, and the spinal cord represent phylogenetically different stages of

the growth of the nervous system, and seem to correspond to different kinds of nervous behaviour—(a) voluntary behaviour, or willed response, corresponding to a previously conscious idea; (b) reflex behaviour, or innate, automatic, unchanging response to stimuli. These two forms of behaviour are not separate, but all behaviour combines differing proportions of each, and the unit of behaviour seems rather the conditioned reflex, in which an innate pattern has been modified by experience. Voluntary behaviour, in which an 'idea' is at work, is in its purest form still like a conditioned reflex, since pre-existing muscular reflexes must be used in behaviour of any kind, and the 'idea' itself is a product of experience.

Thus neurology becomes the study of the integration or mutual interaction of the phylogenetically different systems of neurones, and of the modification of innate responses by experience. The 'problem' of consciousness is solved by supposing that consciousness is associated with cortical innervations for man is highly conscious and the cortex is phylogenetically the most recent development of the nervous system. The whole problem is in fact visualised as that of the human machine, quite in the manner of Frederick's physician. The stimuli excite nervous activity, behaviour results, and at the end of the behaviour the machine is in a new position of equilibrium. This is an improvement on the closed world of physics in that it is more sensuous and therefore more material. Behaviour, attention, perception and appetite cannot be written in terms of Principles of Least Action or Lagrange's equations. But man is still subject to predeterminism; he is still merely a part of the closed world of physics surveyed from without. However much neurologists may dislike to admit it, the philosophy of neurology is mechanical materialism even where (as for example with MacCurdy), an amateurish attempt is made

to escape into a Platonic doctrine of Ideas controlling formless matter ('Patterns').

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Meanwhile gestalt psychology has been making an attempt to reconcile the associationist position with the development, since Mill's time, of neurology. The gestaltists are not, however, neurologists, they do not regard mind as the iridescence accompanying the movement of particles. Since mechanical materialism is not their method of approach the gestalt psychologists are forced into the only other bourgeois alternative—idealism. Gestalt psychology is Platonic idealism.

Needless to say it is not just Platonic idealism, but bourgeois Platonic idealism altered by all that has been learned since, and moreover applied, not to a world view but to a very limited field, chiefly so far that of perception. It starts out with an apparently materialistic programme—all mental phenomena to be explained on a purely physico-chemical basis. Now we are familiar with such programmes. Physics had one—'all matter non-mental'—whose logical outcome, to the surprise of no one but the bourgeois, is that all matter proves to be—equations. In the same way, since physics and chemistry result in bourgeois science from similar restrictive programmes, a physico-chemical explanation of mental data must necessarily be dangerous. It turns out to be purely Hegelian. Gestalt psychology is objective Idealism of a kind. The psychological phenomena dealt with are the result of the activation of forms or configurations (*gestalten*) which are pictured as fields patterned three or even four dimensionally by variations in potential. Stimuli serve both for the activation and modification of these potential-patterns. But a form or pattern is a *concept*. Is not a concept a late product of consciousness and if so, how can

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we explain mental phenomena as the result of the activation of more recent products of itself? We must therefore assume the existence of these concepts, or forms, *objectively*. Now this is Platonism if carried out half-heartedly, or Hegelianism if carried out thoroughly. It is characteristic of the anarchy of bourgeois science that every scientist, in his little province, feels himself at liberty to use for that field only categories which, if applied to the world at large, would seem to him false. The gestalt psychologist is not really a Hegelian. To bourgeois science the closed worlds of modern culture do not seem even a necessary evil; they seem to him part of the method of science, and he feels himself a scientific benefactor in building yet another of them on a small scale.

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Meanwhile, apart from neurology and gestalt psychology, another psychology has been growing which, while least scientific in its theory, has the largest empirical content. It is perhaps the most thoroughly bourgeois in spirit and is therefore the most powerful in its influence on contemporary thought. This is the varied field of instinct psychology, of which two schools may be taken as representative: Freud's psycho-analysis and McDougall's 'hormic' psychology. There are about half a dozen others, of which Jung's, Adler's, MacCurdy's and Burrow's are the most important.

Both see life as the theatre of an indwelling force or conation (McDougall) or instinct (Freud) which is the free source of life's actions on the static environment. A sharp line is thus drawn between life and not-life, between agent and patient, in which life is always insurgent, creative and changeful, and dead matter always resigned, moulded and eternal.

The drama of the instincts then becomes a kind of

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bourgeois novel, in which the heroes are the instincts; and their experiences, mutual struggles and transformations generate not only all psychical but also all cultural phenomena.

Such a view is a fairly accurate description of life as it sees itself in bourgeois consciousness. It is a biological psychology, and therefore makes the same mistake as physical psychology (neurology) and mental psychology (associationism). It dichotomises life and the environment, and defines the environment as all that which possesses no living qualities. The environment is stripped of all qualities common to dead matter and life, and therefore becomes something invariant, ghostly, and unimportant. Everything emerges from within life.

This is the closed world of biology. All change, development, and quality is cooped up within it. Outside is only the Sahara of bourgeois physics, quantitative, changeless, bare. All freedom, all self-determination and all motive force therefore comes within the world of life. Change is not a quality of matter but of life. It becomes a special case in the Universe, and therefore inexplicable. The biological dichotomy necessarily leads us, if we expand it, to an uncaused first cause, a Life-Force or vital spirit, which by its ingression in matter makes matter change and develop and therefore living, for change is regarded as a characteristic peculiar to life. Of course instinct psychology does not advance to such a world-view, or press its assumptions to their logical conclusion. It simply takes as a proven thing the closed world of bourgeois biology, and from it extracts the essence of living action, the instincts, which then become the postulates of psychology.

What in fact are these instincts? They are innate patterns of behaviour automatically elicited by stimuli. They are therefore inevitable recurrences amid the sea of change, like

the seasons. They are determined in fact (predetermined) by past events. The absoluteness at once reveals them as quantitative abstractions, like energy or space in physics.

But this is not how the bourgeois sees them. He necessarily regards all behaviour that bursts 'spontaneously' forth from the individual ignorant of its causality, as above all free. Therefore the instincts are conceived as freely striving for unconscious goals, and psychology becomes the adventures of the free instincts in their struggles against the restraints of the *environment* (in Freud, of *society*) which impede and cripple their freedom. Out of this struggle cognitive and emotional consciousness is born.

Now the only objection to this bourgeois psychology is that it inverts the picture. The instincts are not free springs of connotation towards a goal. They are, so far as they can be abstractly separated, unconscious necessities, as Kant realised. They are unfree. But in their realisation as behaviour, when these innate things-in-themselves become things-for-themselves and interact with their environment (which also changes, and is not the dead world of physics) they also change. Above all, they are changed in human culture. As a result of this change, these necessities become conscious, become emotion and thought; they exist for themselves and are altered thereby. The change *is* the emotion or thought, and now they are no longer the instincts, for they are conscious and consciousness is not an ethereal but a material determining relationship. The necessity that is conscious is not the necessity that is unconscious. The conscious goal is different from the blind 'instinctive' goal. It is freer.

But how can bourgeois instinct psychology grasp this? The magnificent story of human culture becomes in its view simply the tragedy of the crippling of the free instincts by the social restraints they have freely created. The creation of

these social restraints is arbitrary, non-causal and pointless' so that history remains thoroughly bourgeois and indetermined; and each psycho-analyst can give a different explanation of any sociological phenomenon. Experience, art and science are in this psychology the fetters of the instinctive energy; all experiences are the scars of the wounds to this freedom (inhibition and repression). Moreover the unconscious plays a strange rôle. Since experience is in this inversion of life's story the prison house of the free instincts, consciousness (the most recent and least innate products of the psyche) acts the part of gaoler to the unconscious (the most archaic and least conditioned psychic products). Quite a little coercive State reigns in the psyche, complete even to the Censor. Abominable things are done to the instincts; screams (dreams and obsessions) issue from time to time from the dungeons where the noble bourgeois revolutionaries are being tortured by the authorities. It is a picture in the best anarchist style, with the instincts resorting even to terrorism when necessary, and this terrorism is very sympathetically treated by its historians.

And yet this is untrue. It is in the process of living, in experience, that the instincts, those blind patterns, are modified by reality and, becoming conscious of its necessity, change it and themselves, and so become more free. This embrace with reality is in man mediated by the social environment. That the environment does wrongs to man's mind to-day none will deny. These wrongs are not done because consciousness imprisons the instincts with the fetters of necessity; but because bourgeois man is unconscious of the determinism of his culture. Because of this the instincts are losing such freedom as they attained, are becoming crippled, and less free. Unconsciousness and inexperience, not consciousness and experience, are the gaolers of modern bourgeois man.



Thus bourgeois culture cannot use even those good things which it produces. In the ideological sphere as well as the economic, it has embarrassed because it cannot consume the empirical discoveries it has made. Freud, Jung, Adler, McDougall, Kohler, Koffka, Watson, Head, Sherrington, Parsons and MacCurdy have all made discoveries of vital importance for the understanding of mental phenomena, but their full value is lost in the welter of bourgeois culture.

The closed, unplanned worlds of bourgeois science must be broken down, if science is once again to be coherent and fruitful. That is the task of communist science, of dialectical materialism.

Consciousness is a function of life, and we know it primarily as a function of the nervous system. Yet until we see that its relations are not intrinsically peculiar to the nervous system or even to the body as such, but contain elements common to all real matter, though these elements have been carefully rubbed out of the 'matter' of bourgeois physics, we can never escape from mentalism or mechanical materialism. The very nomenclature of modern psychology is mythological.

What is the organ of consciousness? It would be almost reasonable to ask of the earth, what is the organ of liquidity. The answer 'water' would not be very helpful. And yet neurology has an answer of sorts.

The optic thalamus and its outgrowths lie buried in those cerebral hemispheres whose convoluted folds of grey matter, known as the cortex, are hypertrophied in man. The properties of the thalamus have been investigated at a more recent date than those of the cortex. It represents the more primitive portion of man's brain, found well developed

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even in lower animals. The elaborate cortex is a rich outgrowth of this part of the brain. Naturally therefore the thalamus is regarded as the seat of man's more primitive mental functions, and the cortex of his characteristically human mentation, notably 'reason', 'intelligence', and 'consciousness'.

The thalamus appears to be the grand shunting station for cerebral messages. All sensory relations between brain and objects, save those for smell, are 'projected' in the thalamus and then sent up to be re-projected in the cortex. Smell, however, passes straight through to the cortex. Motor messages to nerve plates in muscles also pass from the motor area of the cortex, down through the thalamus, to be distributed via the spinal cord to the body.\*

The cortex consists of fold upon fold of only slightly-differentiated neurones. Its hypertrophy in man is generally correlated with the plasticity of man's behaviour. He comes into the world a *tabula rasa* for habits. Unlike the fixed instinctive reactions of the insects, his behaviour is mainly acquired. It is assumed therefore that the staggeringly complex nerve mesh of the cortex, with its hundreds of millions of cells, is the blank page on which life writes its message.

This has been borne out by the study of cortical lesions. The motor habits of speech, the senses of sight and hearing, the habits of word recognition, writing, and of moving various parts of the body, have all been localised in parts of the cortex.

The primitive nature of the thalamus is suggested by comparison with animals. As one ascends in time the evolutionary tree the cortex grows in bulk, whilst the thalamus

\* Motor impulses do not actually pass through the thalamus as this passage might imply. The main motor tract passes between the thalamus and the basal ganglia. The thalamus however has connexions with other, more primitive, motor nuclei.—B. H. K.

and its associations do not. Some claim that those have even diminished. It is a matter of terminology. The thalamus itself has perhaps dwindled slightly, but its associated non-cortical outgrowths, which may be assumed to share thalamic functions, have somewhat increased. There is no dispute about the quite disproportionate increase in cortical volume.

However, the argument from morphology might be faulty. The thalamus might after all be like the cortex in function. The experiments of Head, Rivers, Sherrington, and Parsons, have discovered evidence which supports the morphological argument. Where for any reason connexions between the thalamus and cortex are severed, so that the cortex is out of action, activity seems to become more instinctive. Up to a point nothing happens, and then there is a sudden and violent reaction, accompanied by emotions of disproportionate strength. This kind of action has been taken to be characteristic of instinct—the ‘all or none’ reaction—and hence this is held to confirm the primitive character of the thalamus.

Head’s bold experiment of severing a nerve in his arm and noting the return of sensation as it healed, uncovered still more interesting phenomena. The experiment led him to differentiate between two forms of sensation, *protopathic* (or primitive) and *epicritic* (or advanced). As the nerve healed protopathic sensation first appeared; then epicritic developed, repressing the older form. One does not develop into the other: there is a dialectic ‘jump’.

Protopathic sensation was discovered to have a high threshold. It was difficult to locate. When, for example in the case of pressure, the high threshold was passed, quite suddenly there was a sensation of acute discomfort, but with very poor discrimination or localisation. This ‘hit and miss’ character of protopathic sensation, as of a man in a

rage swiping blindly at some unknown danger, had already been found to be characteristic of thalamic function. Hence Head and his followers connect protopathic or primitive sensation with the thalamus, as representing a primitive form of sensation, repressed by the evolution of the epicritic system.

The epicritic system by contrast is more discriminating, has a low threshold and does not suddenly pass into acute discomfort. This is normal sensation as we experience it.

It is therefore assumed that the cortex is part of the epicritic system, and contrasts with the thalamus. It is discriminating; it does not act rashly, in gusts, but according to the situation. In Head's view it is continually repressing the instinctive activities of the thalamus, by cortical 'back-stroke', and we may equate this cortical control, it is suggested, with that rational consciousness we feel controlling our actions in actual life.

The epicritic sensations are primarily exteroceptive—as for example sight and hearing. The proprioceptive sensations may however be protopathic. As is well known, the internal organs, bones, etc., are not sensitive; we cannot feel our stomach or intestines move in peristalsis. Nonetheless when a certain threshold is passed internally, we experience a sudden agonising pain and a sensation of 'structural discomfort', dull, heavy, and alarming. This kind of sensation, as Head had already found, is characteristic of the protopathic system before the epicritic sensation has manifested itself. Presumably therefore internal sensation is still largely thalamic. Again, when we are 'thrown off our balance' by sudden gusts of rage, it is to be assumed that cortical control has vanished temporarily and our behaviour is thalamic.

This dualism was not accepted without opposition. It was

for instance criticised by neurologists of the standing of Pizron. Nonetheless the general trend of research has if anything confirmed Head's distinction between cortex and thalamus, although the sharpness of many of his definitions has been modified. As a result it is usual to schematise the neurological basis of consciousness as follows: All sensation comes *via* the nerve receptors to the thalamus, where it would provoke instinctive 'all-or-none' reaction were it not for cortical control. It then passes on to the cortex, where it emerges as conscious perception. Discriminative motor habits arising out of this perception are assumed to be lodged in the cortex, while the more instinctive motorisms are located in the thalamus. Thus the general view is that consciousness is primarily, if not solely, the activation of sensation or motor traces in the cortex, and that all delicate affective shades are similarly cortical. Thalamic activity, it is assumed, is associated with unconscious or subliminal perceptions and instinctive motorisms. All violent effective outbursts, particularly severe pains, are assumed to be thalamic. The thalamus is the rebel, the seat of the unconscious, the instinctive proletariat, which that well-educated and refined bureaucracy, the cortex, with its unemotional logical consciousness, keeps (not without difficulty) in order.

At a still lower level is the bulbo-spinal system, concerned with simple reflexes. This may be omitted from our discussion for the moment.

Certain psychologists, such as Marston, have suggested that consciousness is primarily a function of the synapses. This however will not affect the present argument. Since wherever there is a nerve connexion there is a synapse, and since no one suggested all synapses are simultaneously active, the synaptic theory leaves it open as to which parts of the nervous system are in fact concerned in consciousness.

In any case there are more synapses in the cortex than elsewhere. Therefore it is fair to say that the view we have outlined represents the trend of opinion, as far as there can be such a thing, amongst modern neurologists. It will be seen that it is still influenced by bourgeois biology. The free instincts are controlled by the cortex. Experience throttles unconscious life. Freedom is the unconsciousness of the necessity of reality, learned in experience.

It would however be just as accurate to picture the thalamus as the organ of conscious instinct and the cortex as the organ of unconscious thought. In either case we are simply playing about with terms. Consciousness is not so simple as that.

Cortical consciousness is equated in current neurological theory with epicritic sensation. The essence of epicritic sensation is fine discrimination. Thalamic sensation—which is *unconscious* or (as Rivers visualises it) repressed by cortical control—is lacking in discrimination. Thus a light touch on the skin, easily detected by the epicritic system, has to be increased to a hard pressure before it is perceived by the protopathic system, which then explodes affectively.

How does this theory square with the facts of consciousness?

Few of the doctrines of psychology receive more general assent than that of subliminal impressions. Impressions have to reach a certain threshold value before they are consciously perceived. That such impressions, although not perceived consciously, have yet left memory traces, *i.e.* have been perceived unconsciously, is evidenced by the fact that they can be recovered in hypnotic trance, when what is loosely called 'the unconscious' is made accessible. The phenomena of hyperæsthesia are explained in this way. Sounds, scents and cutaneous and visual discriminations not normally in the conscious field, are made accessible by the

inclusion with the ego in hypnotic trance of a large part of what is normally unconscious sensation. In the same way slight impressions, separately unconscious, appear eventually by repetition to summate until they can rise above the threshold of consciousness, when the ego then becomes 'aware' of the previous repetitions.

Now this at once raises the query, damaging for the usual theory, why consciousness should show all the characteristics of protopathic sensation—restricted field and lack of fine discrimination—while unconsciousness proves itself endowed with epicritic discrimination and range of sensation. Head's view, as we have said, is that epicritic sensation 'repressed' protopathic sensation, or made it unconscious. The facts concerning subliminal impressions, if valid, contradict it. They do not however prove the reverse, for Head's own experiments show that protopathic sensation can also be conscious. The conclusion would appear to be that consciousness has nothing to do with either epicritic or protopathic sensation, nor repression with unconsciousness, but that we must think along other lines in order to understand what the relations are.

Let us consider such a simple question at the ordinary visual field, and its connexion with degrees of consciousness. It is well known that we do not regard the visual field as an undifferentiated whole, but that different parts of it have different values. This is expressed in the older theory of a faculty of 'attention' (which, like consciousness, has been located in the cortex) and in the *gestalt* or 'field' theory, which is really an elaborate attention psychology made objective. Thus motion of objects attracts the attention to them. We see *interesting* objects. A woman sees a bat; an artist's attention is caught by features of light and shade unnoticed to others; a detective sees a criminal face. We all tend to see shapes in shadows, figures in clouds, to fill out

and round off contrasts, according to the schemes made clear by gestalt experiments. Attention is a name for the actual element in perception.

Now though we may say that all the visual field is 'consciousness', it is plain that different degrees of consciousness range over the visual field. Thus the sportsman, watching rabbits, sees a vague background with a very distinct brown animal moving over it. Perceptually the rabbit is more conscious to him than its surroundings, and more discrimination is made as to size, markings of coat, and movements in this rabbit. A botanist surveying the same scene might however see nothing clearly except a flower in the field.

Here is made plain the nature of the contradiction between epicritic and protopathic sensations and consciousness. Consciousness is at its highest point in the rabbit region of the visual field to the sportsman. Even the beast's whiskers are clear to his eye. Here sensation is epicritic.

At the same time, in the rest of the visual field nothing is consciously noted but a green blur. Here then sensation is protopathic. But in both cases sensation is conscious. The weaker conscious sensation is protopathic, the stronger epicritic. If, however, the sportsman were to be hypnotised, our knowledge of subliminal perception compels us to believe that we could recover, out of that green blur, details of perception which the sportsman had not consciously experienced. Thus here sensation, *unconscious* sensation, is epicritic. Experiments with eidetic imagery seem to confirm this view.

This compels us to suppose that consciousness, in its vividness or degree or even actual existence, cannot be correlated with either epicritic or protopathic sensation. It can however be correlated with what has come to be called



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interest or 'attention'. Interest is an affective phenomenon. Consciousness therefore is affective tone.

To return to another feature of the cortex—the richness and plasticity of its reactions. Man's thought is almost certainly more rich and plastic than that of any animal. His range of memories, the subtlety of his discrimination among them and his faculty of language with all the richness of content it involves, are outcomes of this. Consequently we rightly regard the hypertrophied human cortex as the seat of this peculiarly human richness of association and mental structure.

But when we come to consciousness, we find in it a feature which is peculiarly uncortical—its thinness and *linear* character. Consciousness is a one-track activity. Man can normally only follow one train of thought at a time, and this train consists, even in the richest thinkers, of a succession of single images in the spotlight of consciousness, surrounded by a dim, half-conscious fuzz. None of the richness characteristic of human thought in the universal, is characteristic of consciousness in the particular. Everyone knows we can only concentrate on one thing at a time. Moreover the intimacy of the connexion is shown by the kind of inverse law it follows. The more conscious and vivid the mental product, the more linear and sparse its real content. It does not seem poor to us, because of its vividness. The height of its consciousness seems to atone for its simplicity, but still it is simple. The thing that 'worries' us and demands all our attention, obliterates all other associations. The sight of one we love makes us 'forget everything else'. The approach of a mad bull blots out the rest of the visual field.

But this is very uncortical, for the cortex is by hypothesis the seat of immensely complex motor kinæsthetic and sensory co-ordinations. Consciousness appears unable to use

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more than a few of these at a time; and the richer it is, the fewer they are. If we regard the human cortex, in a well-educated person, as consisting of  $n$  potentialities, consciousness at any moment can only be concerned with a minute fraction of  $n$ . The rest are unconscious. Therefore the cortex is primarily an unconscious rather than a conscious organ. It is like a library of knowledge with only one owner. Despite its immense resources, the owner at any one instant can only scan one word in one line in one book, though given time and opportunity he can read what he likes and find what he likes in the realm of human knowledge.

Therefore, cortical consciousness is really chiefly cortical unconsciousness. The cortex is the great unopened dictionary, the grand reservoir of the temporarily forgotten. Consciousness in the cortex is the glowing of a few neurones out of hundreds of millions—an exception, a tiny localisation. Unless we think the unconscious of no importance, we would do better to regard the cortex as the seat of unconsciousness. This would give man a larger unconscious than the beasts, but is not this just what we would expect—is not the beast's knowledge more at its instant command, less influenced by memory and association and therefore by the temporarily forgotten but recallable? True, though forgotten is recallable, but no one would restrict the name 'unconscious' to the completely unavailable, for, if it is completely unavailable, by no means can it be proved to exist. We make therefore the suggestion that unconsciousness and not consciousness, is the distinctive feature of man's cortical outgrowth; and that this shows the weakness of current distinctions between consciousness and unconsciousness.

\* \* \* \*

These considerations suggest others. What governs the tiny localisation of conscious light in the vast Arctic night of

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the cortex? The feature of the cortex, histologically, is its lack of differentiation. Each part is like any other part. The localisations of speech and similar functions seem arbitrary. How much more arbitrary seems the local play of consciousness.

What this suggests can be shown by analogy. In a network of electrified wires we see, constant at one point, a glowing 'hot spot'. We might suppose either that this was due to a blowpipe flame from outside, applied to that spot, or to a kind of local short due to the connexions of the wires.

If, however, we saw that the hot spot moved continually about from wire to wire, we should infer, on the normal principle of induction, that there was some mobile outside cause. Either the blowpipe flame was being moved, or there was some switching apparatus continually changing the direction of the current. In either case, though the hot spot was in the wire system, we should regard it as external.

In the same way, considering the moving spotlight of consciousness in the cortical library, it seems that we must regard its movement as due to some other cause, some external switchboard. We have already correlated consciousness, both in existence and vividness, with affective tone. Assuming that the thalamus is primarily concerned in affective activity, the switching organ, directing consciousness into the local cortical channel, must be thalamic. If therefore anything has the right to be called the organ of consciousness, it would be the thalamus. But this again shows the inadequate conception of consciousness current in psychology. A conscious thought is the affective 'heating' of a cortical trace. The greater the heat, the greater the consciousness. The cortical trace is not the consciousness, because the cortex is, by assumption, an enormous mass of traces, all undifferentiated and all unconscious. The consci-

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ousness, if we must make a mere quality substantive, is the affective heat, for that and that alone produces consciousness. But actually to separate affect and idea is Aristotelean; it is like separating form and matter.

Our theory has certain analogies with the kinetic theory of heat. The molecules correspond to the cortex. The vibration of the molecules is the consciousness. The perpetually boiling organ, selectively communicating its vibrations, is the thalamus. Its boiling is a reflection of the whole relation between body and environment.

Since the organism is a unity, consciousness must be unitary in nature, and the more intense the vividness, the greater the limitation of consciousness. It is wrong, however, to equate this with a constant supply of conscious energy, which must therefore be either deep and thin or wide and shallow.

The reason for the limitations of content when vividness is present must be sought elsewhere. Attention to externals, *i.e.* to objects in the visual or stimulus field, is characteristic of all animals. It is simply that activity which is regarded as characteristic of life. Sensibility is a readiness to respond to certain stimuli, which in itself implies activity towards such stimuli. Simple organisms respond to food particles in the tactile field; higher animals to prey or mates or traces suggestive of them in the visual field. Men notice a wider range of 'things' and discriminate more subtly, but always the vivid conscious part of the visual field is something that can awake their instincts, which in turn are defined as the entities which are awakened by those particular stimuli.

Thus consciousness is simply a specific feature of sensibility, a form of behaviour. Sensibility involves on the one hand an innate response to certain things and, on the other hand, certain things in the environment to be interested in. For example, in a unicellular organism, sensibility involves

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the tendency to be irritated by contact with small round objects (potential food) and also the small round objects at any given moment in contact with the organism.

This stimulus elicits the response, and there is no gulf, only a matter of degree, between this simple manifestation of irritability, and the sportsman with a tendency to be irritated by the rabbit and the presence of the rabbit in his visual field, both making up the consciousness of the rabbit in all its vividness.

True he is also conscious of the green blur which is the rest of the visual field. But if an organism is to be highly irritated by all small round objects that are food, like the *amœba*, it must be slightly irritated, as the *amœba* is, by all small round objects tactually presented. In the same way, if the animal or the sportsman is to be irritated by the presence of prey in the visual field, if he is to 'notice' them, he must be slightly irritated by the visual field as a whole and always must be slightly conscious of it. In other words, before we can become conscious of a thing, we must first become unconscious of it. We must have awareness over a wide general field.

It might be thought that the visual field, in all its inclusiveness, cannot be compared with an *amœba* in tactile contact with a hard object. But in fact, the visual field is an empirical and exclusive construction. It neglects most of the possible wave-lengths of radiation, ignores distant features, and does not observe any molecular or atomic phenomena or real movements above and below a certain speed. It is in fact as much a concentration of interest as a protozoan's exclusive concern with small round objects. The protozoan's whole world is small round objects. Our visual field is similarly limited to phenomena which, as we evolved, have proved of interest to us, such as the common light octave (in colour).

An instinct is an innate response of a certain nature to external or somatic stimuli, or both. We should not consider an animal as possessing instincts but only potential instincts, just as the cortex as a whole is not conscious but only potentially conscious. We should regard instinct only as it appears in behaviour, as a response to some situation. It is true that we should thus never get a pure instinct, for the situation is always slightly different and therefore even in insects the behaviour is always slightly different. This is all to the good.

This would simplify the theory of mentation. Living response or sensibility, including conscious mentation, consists of potential instinct, which is the whole sum of inborn responses to somatic stimuli or environmental stimuli. This is a purely fictive conception, but methodologically useful, like the 'genotype' in heredity. Actually nothing is ever known, either in behaviour or in consciousness, except potential instinct reacting to its somatic or environmental stimuli and being changed thereby. Where we part company with the behaviourist, who does not recognise consciousness, is that we recognise consciousness and include it as a form of behaviour. Thus we regard the visual field as instinctive behaviour modified by experience. It is the instinctive response of the cortical and thalamic projective areas to stimuli. The stimuli are to us so complex in the normal visual field that we naïvely regard them as 'all reality', instead of just a selection from it. This brings conscious perception within the field of causality. It determines and is determined, and this we already know from quantum physics. Observation is an active process—a return to Cartesian theories of vision on a higher plane.

Instincts are modified in experience. Some, like those of the insects, are only slightly modifiable. Others, like the dog's food response or man's various responses to

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stimuli, are capable of far more conditioning. This can be regarded as an enriching or complicating of them. Thus the instinctive visual field of the baby is modified, and made richer and more discriminating, in the grown man. Innate behaviour becomes in experience complex behaviour. This is a simple dialectic law of development.

The visual field is a conditioned, instinctive response to stimuli. There is a slight response to a large number of stimuli, which we may call simply vision. This slight sensory response guarantees the visual, aural or tactual field as a whole. Under the influence of some more specialised innate response—to prey, mates or danger—we notice more eagerly, more consciously and more vividly some one object in that visual, aural, or tactile field. We behave towards it in a different way. The greater specificity of the response makes us consider a unit instinct is at work, but this is only a name for a consistent difference in behaviour towards a class of objects. It is thus determined also by the environment.

The linear nature of consciousness, limited in proportion to its vividness, is therefore necessary. Instinct is action. The efficiency of the body and its very survival can only be secured by the fact that it acts integrally. The higher the organism, the more true we find this integration of response, a unity in diversity. Since consciousness is part of the complete response, it must be all of a piece with the rest of the response, including the body's overt action. This means we must only see or think of those things most immediately relevant to the instinctive action as a whole. Thus the tendency of the organism to flee from danger ensures that, when danger appears in the visual field, the organism is not conscious of its tailor's unpaid bill, what it ate for dinner last week, or the infinity of the Universe, but only of the mad bull, and the nearest exit from the field, while at the same

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time the body's response is limited to visceral vaso-motor constriction, emission of adrenalin into the blood from the suprarenal glands, and rapid running movement with the legs.

Plainly the ego, insofar as we regard it as the stream of consciousness, is our name for this fact. The integrity of the organism creates the ego, not the ego the organism.

The association of affects or emotions with the instincts has always been puzzling. The 'instincts' seem to give rise to affects, and yet instinctive activity can appear without them. Restricting ourself to the case of conscious perception of a dangerous object in the visual field, we see that there are two elements in the response—intra-somatic behaviour (adrenalic secretion and so forth)—and extra-somatic (running). The first assists the second. Vision is only involved as a part of action, and is stripped of all but its bare essentials for the purpose. Therefore the simpler the extra-somatic response, the more 'one-to-one' its correspondence with innate reflexes, the less the need for the activation of the cortical traces of experience. Both affect and consciousness are therefore functions of the complexity of the potentially stimulating field, and its relation to the modified reflexes of the organism.

Certain animals, for example the insects, in spite of elaborate instinctive activity, are closely geared to an unvarying chain. The sphex will sting only one species of wasp, and only in a certain way. There is therefore in spite of the complexity of the overt behaviour, a poverty of alternative objects and a poverty of alternative behaviour. The correspondence is virtually one-to-one. We should expect such creatures to experience no affects and no consciousness. Stimuli and reflexes match perfectly and weave an almost unvarying fabric.

Nonetheless we must regard consciousness as a matter of



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degree. Just as heat and cold are simply varying rates of molecular motion, which we divide subjectively into 'hotter than ours,' and 'colder than ours,' consciousness and unconsciousness simply represent degrees of affective vividness. Many states subliminal for us might well be binding consciousness for fishes. Even in insects there cannot be anything like perfect one-to-one correspondence of innate instinct to stimulus. There is no absolute degree of consciousness. It is the ego that is conscious but the ego in turn is composed of a series of experiences selected above a certain indistinct threshold. Naturally, to this ego anything below the threshold seems unconscious, but this is merely because it is the ego which is doing the description.

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The conception of a switchboard is often used for neural operations. It seems less objectionable than most analogies, for the neurone undoubtedly has junctions, and transmits impulses along its length by means of waves of potential difference. But it differs from a switchboard in having no operator, a fact which causes psychologists to invent instincts, consciousness, and egos which operate the switches. Perhaps the automatic telephone may eliminate these mythical deities. The brain is an extremely elaborate automatic telephone system, in which the stimuli are the subscribers dialling, in which the apparatus is modified by experience, and in which the body is part of the system—flesh, blood and all.

In all switchboard schematisations of the neural system, the cortex is pictured as the seat of a highly competent Postmaster-General, directing all the other chains of relays, down to the humble reflexes in the basement. This P.M.G. is usually equated with consciousness. Our hypothesis has no use for this overworked official.

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If we must personify, let us personify the thalamus, and let us imagine it, at a primitive level, faced with the task of making more epicritic its sensations, and its action more discriminating. It will do so by manufacturing an intricate system through which sensations and motor activities can be relayed, sorted out, stored and recombined, and where the increased complexity of the possible combinations will make more epicritic the actions. In other words, the cortex (if we must personify) is the *servant* of the thalamus rather than the master. (But either picture is inaccurate.)

Any engineer faced with the task of increasing the possible combinations of a given circuit—e.g. the number of telephone numbers diallable—would at once see that some ‘hierarchy’ must be called for. A must control B and C; in turn B will control D and E and C will control G and F, and so on. Only in this way can unity of action as well as discrimination, be secured. Yet it is just unity which is the feature of consciousness, represented in the ego and its linear form of thought. Hence for the arbiter or controller of cortical activity, we must look to some concentrated organ holding all the cortical threads in its hands. This would be, for sheer mechanical reasons, the optic thalamus.

Consciousness streams on with different contents, yet we feel there is an unchanging basis for it, sharing all experiences alike. This unchanging basis, this ego, is something that has access to vast stores of experience, but itself maintains its general pattern. This would correspond to the thalamus, through which all active ingoing and outgoing impulses pass, but which has itself little mnemonic grey matter. The cortex on the other hand is highly mnemonic.

Let it be understood that we do not regard consciousness as exclusively thalamic, or the ego as seated in the thalamus and its outgrowths. This is to make the mistake of the mythologists. The thalamus, because of its strategic posi-

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tion, is the spear-point of consciousness. Consciousness is a behaviour of the whole nervous system. It is one out of a number of conditioned responses to stimuli.

Inhibition is a feature of consciousness but is not peculiar to it. The amoeba performs, in response to a given stimulus, one out of several possible actions. The others therefore are inhibited. The organism which runs in response to danger inhibits other possible actions. The organism which thinks is innervating certain neurone groups, corresponding to older motor and sensory groupings, and this constitutes a thought or wish or feeling, one out of many possible, the others being inhibited or unconscious.

Consider a definite situation: *There is a bull in the field of vision*. This stimulus, as a result of thalamic switching, activates adrenal and visceral innervations, and produces a general somatic readiness to make the fear-response. Owing to the nature of the situation—the choice of flight or fighting, and the different paths available for both—there is a good deal of thalamic sparking among different possible muscular reactions, and these thalamic sparkings correspond to fear-consciousness. Some of the energy as a result of more thalamic switching flows into the cortex, where it innervates nerve groups corresponding to thoughts of danger, possible paths, and vague remorse at having taken the wrong short-cut—all glowing with the fear affect. No fear affect, no consciousness of these thoughts.

Thus the conscious field consists of protopathic visceral circuits, a mediating thalamic circuit, and an epicritic cortical circuit. We cannot say that consciousness is located exclusively in any one of these circuits. True, no one is conscious without a cortex, but neither are they conscious without a thalamus. All are concerned; all are integrated in the one response to the stimulus; all combine to produce the one common conscious field.

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In this pressing danger, we might examine the bull more closely. We then draw on the traces in the cortical retinal area, to discriminate more closely the features of the bull. Could it be pacified? Is it a large one? Could we side-step its charge? This more discriminating perception, in which memory enters, is the thalamus drawing on the cortex for information, or if we like it is affectivity piling up and leaking into other cortical areas.

We may visualise the bulbo-spinal area as the home of innate reflexes which experience will not greatly change. The cortex on the other hand is the place where all motor and sensory experiences leave traces, which because of their elaborate wiring, will be more discriminating, more easily split up and more plastic and learnable than elsewhere. Moreover since their knowledge will be required when instinct has not a one-to-one correlation between stimulus and response, it is precisely the cortical cells which will receive the affective glow of a 'puzzled' thalamus sparking and trying various alternative lines. This emotion will therefore be always associated with cortical contents, except in severe pains or thalamic protopathic explosions. Hence our mistaken belief that it is a matter of cortical 'control'.

Rather is it a matter of cortical advice. The thalamus might plead that it is only 'human' and cannot remember everything, and neurologists would admit that its deficiency in grey matter would explain its poor memory. Nevertheless, as a result of æons of experience, with comparatively little differentiation, it is a magnate of strong will and simple notions. It has the main policy of the firm at its finger tips. Such persons are normally put at the helm of power. At its service, however, it has a staff of experts, and in any ordinary circumstance it consults them (thought). Naturally, in view of their experience, it acts on their advice. The body of experts might therefore claim that they control their

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chief. Nonetheless the reality of thalamic power is shown in all emergencies calling for instantaneous motor response of a nature so simple that the thalamus has known it for centuries. The cortex is ignored. Again, if a complex situation recurs, even the thalamic memory is sufficient to deal with the situation. This is habit.\*

Consciousness might be regarded as an affective light, which plays upon cortical, thalamic, visceral and sensory neurones.† They 'clump' together and separate out. Hence our elaborate classifications of conscious affects, feelings, thoughts, memories and percepts—all purely bogus, if we regard them as describing separate entities. Naturally a cortical neurone, under affective activity, 'feels' different to a visceral or sensory neurone, because it has a different chronaxy, composition, architecture and mnemonic past, but its feeling is pooled in the common structure.

If Marston is right, and consciousness is a synaptic phenomenon, this would account for the variation of affectivity. A simple reflex would not be conscious, because the synapses are firmly 'closed'. When however they are open there is a sparking, which is an affect and goes to compose consciousness. In protopathic systems a heavy stimulus would be needed to open the somewhat 'rusty' synapses, but the spark would be correspondingly intense and

\* There is no evidence to support the view that an habitual response to a complex situation is dependent on 'thalamic memory'. Rather would the work of Pavlov's school and recent experience of head injuries suggest that an intact cortex is essential for this type of response. By contrast with the emergency situation described above however such a familiar situation will evoke a response with a minimum of affect and consciousness—i.e. be another example of the role of the cortex as the organ of unconsciousness.—B. H. K.

† Cortical, thalamic, visceral and sensory neurones. The meaning of the passage is obscured by this classification, since sensory neurones are both thalamic and cortical, and visceral are mainly thalamic. What is clearly intended however is a contrast between the cells of the cortex and those of the evolutionarily older parts of the brain, including the thalamus.—B. H. K.

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explosive. The smooth 'frictionless' synapses of the cortex and epicritic sensory system open and close quietly. The cortex appears to control and modify response as a whole, because it forms a part of most circuits. It corresponds to a capacitance effect in radio. There is no 'seat' of integration in an organism. Integration, precisely because it is integration, is the function of the entire organism.

Directed thinking is an affective river in the cortex. All thinking has a strong affective component, otherwise it would not be conscious. Why (to take apparently the least affective instance) do we turn over one of thousands of possible mathematical problems? Because that one interests us. Interest is nothing but affect.

The affective association of conscious ideas, rediscovered by Freud and Janet, is not therefore odd, but the only possible law of conscious thought considered subjectively. Affects are the stuff of ideas. Association by contiguity is meaningless neurologically. It explains association of ideas by another idea, that of contiguity. Needless to say ideas whose original stimuli are spatio-temporally contiguous, are likely to share the same affective tone, and as such are likely to revive together. Given in every experience is a subject and object. Association by contiguity is objective association of experiences.

Whether it is the cat springing precisely on its prey, or the mathematician solving a problem, the behaviour is the same in principle. First there is the tendency called forth by the stimulus—the desire to solve the problem. Then the conformity of the behaviour with reality, that is the flowing of the affective current of interest, by elaborate and tortuous synaptic paths, among just those cortical cells which experience has shown to be necessary. The animal stalking its prey, fatigued and stung by the brushwood, and the mathematician, with wrinkled brow, solving the thorny problem,

are both exhibiting the same behaviour, except that the animal's is overt, the mathematician's intra-somatic. The exultant pounce of the animal, fatigue forgotten, and the joyful 'Eureka!' of the mathematician, his frown changing to a smile, are evidences of similar terminations to the transaction.

Sleep frees us from attention to present reality. It inhibits by closing the sensory roads (a patient with anæsthesia of the skin is liable to fall asleep at any moment). Since the cortex is the great storehouse of memory, *i.e.* of recent reality, it is asleep. We never smell in dreams,\* and smell alone of the senses goes to the cortex without thalamic intervention. In sleep, the 'instinct', or 'innate tendency' to conform to reality, which is simply the connexion of the cortex to the nervous circuit, is cut off. Our learning is forgotten. We mould our thoughts like a child. The thalamus reveals that, without his advisers, he is in spite of his energy a savage. The strongly visual character of dreams is presumably due to the large retinal projection on the thalamus.† The fact that most dream contents can be referred to the previous day, might be attributed to the unmnemic character of the thalamus. There may be some cortical activity in dream, but the primitive protopathic character of dream sensations, the indistinct faces, the condensation of images—which would be characteristic of a non-discriminating organ—all

\* Smell in dreams. This statement is controversial but if incorrect does not vitiate the main argument, since the rhinopallium, or part of the cortex which deals with smell, is much more akin to the thalamus than other parts of the cortex.

† Thalamus and vision. The thalamus was at one time known as the optic thalamus, a misnomer since the fibres of the optic tract do not relay in the thalamus. There are however other relay stations in the optic apparatus which may play a similar rôle in regard to visual stimuli. It is obvious that dreams are not wholly explicable on the basis of thalamic activity and that a cortical element must be assumed. The general argument, that in the dream state the rôle of the thalamus is dominant, can however be supported.—B. H. K.

seem thalamic. Since we have not equated consciousness with the cortex, the vividness and reality of dreams present no difficulty. Dreams are the opposite to '*déjà vue*' phenomena, in which real percepts seem memories. In dream, memories seem real percepts. The former some psychiatrists attribute to thalamic inactivity; the latter therefore we attribute to thalamic activity. By active and inactive, we mean active and inactive relatively to the cortex.

Now all this is very well as far as it goes. We have tried to join the two ends of mental and biological psychology. But we reach a certain point with neurology, and then are up against the difficulty that neurology is a branch of biology, that outside stands the closed world of bourgeois physics, and, arbitrarily planted on top of the closed world of neurology, is the closed world of mentalism, or bourgeois faculty psychology. By the very definitions of bourgeois psychology, we are forced to regard innervations and thoughts, nerves and consciousness, matter and mind as distinct classes of entities, mutually exclusive. Until dialectical materialism has broken down this exclusiveness, not only in psychology but in physics, biology, philosophy and sociology, how can we begin to formulate a theory of consciousness that will not be dualistic and strained?

But we can perhaps indicate the road, starting from the foundations. We must sweep away the concept of the bourgeois in opposition to and separate from the environment.

In this Newtonian schematisation, the bourgeois and the environment obey entirely different laws; the bourgeois stops at his skin. The consciousness is 'something' that sits inside, while outside 'reality' raps on the nerve-endings in code, which code is 'interpreted' inside the skin. This is precisely how Eddington formulates the situation, evidently believing it to be the 'scientific' view.

But in fact the bourgeois is only an organised whirlpool



## CONSCIOUSNESS

of matter in his environment, constantly changing, constantly being renewed. The consciousness is the organisation of a part of it, but the organisation is not separate from the matter, like a concept or universal. The matter is organised. The organisation is a quality of matter.

The Universe becomes. Not merely man becomes, but change, motion and development are the law of the Universe. The Universe does not change and become in Time. Relativity and quantum physics clearly show the time *is* the change, and the becoming. All phenomena A, B, and C, etc. are connected so that A is included in B, B in C, C in D, and so on. This inclusion in difference is Becoming, development, and reality. This involves a substratum of likeness in the Universe, that which changes, that which is the same in all change. This we abstract as space, as the aspects of matter expressed in the conservation laws (mass, energy, interval, action). This we regard as the stuff of the Universe. This is what mathematic is concerned with, what quantity is, what the basis is of all predictive laws of science.

But equally it involves a superstructure of unlikeness in the Universe—the change as change, the difference in all events. This we abstract as Time, as the qualities in matter not obeying conservation laws (colour, consciousness, beauty). This we regard as the *aspect* of the Universe, precisely because it is the difference that interests us. This is quality, the basis of all art and sensuous culture.

But any absolute dichotomy into reality and appearance, space and time, matter and motion, primary and secondary qualities or object and subject, is erroneous and denies the reality either of change or of existence. Both are intimately blended in becoming. It is not separate things that become entirely in themselves, but the Universe is one, there are determining relations between all phenomena. These determining relations are the becoming. If any group were self-

## FURTHER STUDIES IN A DYING CULTURE

determined, it would be unknowable and unknowing in its relations to the rest, and would not therefore exist. The Universe is a material unity.\*

This is true, not merely of life but of all that is, from consciousness to physics, and this guarantees that these worlds cannot in fact be closed nor their laws remain unchanged. And change, the increase in organisation, is newness; it is what consciousness is. But we can never set something aside, and say: This is entirely new, it has no old in it—for that would be to *separate* something from the Universe, to deny change and dichotomise becoming.

The like, that which remains, is, in the biological sphere, instinct and habit and heredity. The unlike, that which is new, is experience, knowledge and acquired characters. Each generates the other in dialectic movement. In the evolution of consciousness, instinct is experience, gives rise to memory and affect, and is now no longer the old instinct. We may lodge experience in the cortex and instinct in the bulbo-spinal system, but both can only be separated in abstraction. There is only bodily behaviour, that is, material becoming in which body and environment are involved.

Body and environment are in constant determining relations. Perception is not the decoding of tappings on the skin. It is a determining relation between neural and environmental electrons. Every part of the body not only affects the other parts but is also in determining relations with the rest of reality. It is determined by it and determines it, this interchange producing development—the constantly changing series of interlocking events, A, C, C. . . . Of this multitude of relations, spatio-temporal, perceptual and mnemonic, we distinguish a certain group, changing as the world changes, not with it or separately from it but in

\* This position is fully stated in the essay *Reality*, see below, p. 210

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mutually determining interaction with it. This selection, rich, highly organised and recent, we call the consciousness, or our ego. We do not select it out. In the process of development it separates out, as life separated out, as suns and planets, and the elements separated out from the process of becoming. Separated out, and still changing, it is consciousness, it is *us* in so far as we regard ourselves as conscious egos. But in separating out, it does not completely separate out, any more than any element did. It remains, like them in determining relation with the rest of the Universe, and the study of the organisation of this developed structure, of its inner relations and the relations of the system with all other systems in the Universe, is psychology—not bourgeois psychology, but the psychology of dialectical materialism.

We can say that such a psychology will only purge itself of the dualisms and anarchy of present-day psychology by realising that it is the science of the minds of men living in concrete society. These men are material bodies entering into social relations with each other and the rest of the material universe. This means the abandonment of the mythical categories of bourgeois psychology, which has proved itself unable to advance beyond the conception of the abstract individual psyche, the self-consciousness of the individual in civil society—in a society where the individual, because society has not yet found itself, has lost himself.

## REALITY

### *A Study in Bourgeois Philosophy*

IT has been obvious for some time that the world of physics has been deviating farther and farther from the world of perception. The world of physics is a world composed of points and instants and lines, bare of quality. Nothing in it can be felt, smelt, or seen. The world of relativity physics, which combines space and time, seems to take us ever farther from reality as directly experienced. How is this, for physics is built up from the results of perception? This discrepancy between Newton's and Einstein's theories was settled in favour of Einstein by perception—the Michelson-Morley experiment, the eclipse experiment and observation of Mercury's movements. The perceived world therefore is primary and gives status to the various possible self-consistent logical worlds. The perceived world is *real*. Should it not therefore be possible to express the world of physics in terms of less abstract entities? Could we not make it *sound* like the real world? That was the goal of Whitehead's method of Extensive Abstraction.

To take an example, space may be defined as built up of points, and *betweenness*, a property of these points; and these points may be defined in various ways. The Euclidean method was to define a point as an entity having position but no magnitude, which is obviously a thing never met with in perception. Points may also be defined as the class of ordered triads of real numbers with their signs, which seems

an even more remote definition but is, thanks to the development of Cantorian transfinities, one which gives the required properties of continuity to space. Either definition is equally satisfactory for developing a geometry.

Whitehead suggests instead that we should regard points as of the class of 'sets' of volumes. For example, the set of concentric spheres converging in a limit gives all the extensive relations of a point. The intensive properties of such a set are not what we might expect from a point, but the intensive relations of such entities do not concern us any more than the interior of the earth concerns the map-maker. Whitehead develops his theory with great logical skill. He treats time in a similar way, using a class of overlapping events to represent the 'instant' of older physics. Russell has a method different in detail, but similar in principle.

Whitehead and Russell therefore make the curious assumption that 'volumes' or 'events' are more gross, and perceptually obvious to anyone than points or instants. But a volume is an abstract idea. Our sensory surfaces, with which we gain our knowledge of external reality, are all areas, not volumes, and the nerve endings are dotted about this area, each ending providing a point of sensation, which is a kind of minimum sensory datum. Thus sensation is, like mathematical space, built up of points, lines and areas, and these are built up by experience into volumes. Even a line or area will be explored by the motion of the point nerve-endings over it. Points can therefore claim at least as much concrete existence in perception as volumes. True, physiological points, unlike geometrical points, have magnitude, but it does not feel as if they had, because they constitute a threshold. In any case, perceptual volumes differ as widely from geometrical volumes as sensory from geometrical points.

## FURTHER STUDIES IN A DYING CULTURE

The perception of abstract volumes in fact require a high order of sophistication. We never perceive abstract volume without considerable education in abstractions. I doubt if anyone even among painters, *saw* volume, until Cézanne. Neither primitive man, nor the Bushman, nor the average child, perceive volume in the abstract, if their paintings are any clue. It is always *stuff*, voluminous things, vapour, clouds, mass, that we perceive. Matter is perceptual; volume is not.

But I am even more critical of the assumption that it is only from what we perceive that physical abstractions are built up. On what grounds can this be justified? It is I who experience. My conscious world is filled, not only with things, volumes, points, but with desires, hopes, and memories. Why must these be omitted? Why do those very philosophers such as Kant, Whitehead and Russell, who hold the egoistic components of the conscious field to be primary, demand that physics be built up out of secondary entities?

They do so because the bourgeois philosopher cannot help producing this dualism, and yet he remains unconscious of its source. It is not Berkeley who fights mechanical materialism, but Berkeley who generates it. Condillac does not refute solipsism, he produces it. Hume does not dissolve the causal world of physics in which atoms move according to foresight of a divine calculator; on the contrary, it is Hume who calls such a parody of reality into existence.

Given in reality is subject and object. No sphere of reality is absolutely self-determined, for if it were it would be unknowable, and therefore would not exist. Between subject and object exists a network of relations, including the *conscious field*. Since no part of reality is isolated, this conscious field must be directly or indirectly have determining

links with every part of reality. Since reality is becoming, subject to endless change, this conscious field may continually increase in size and still more intricately develop inside reality.

Because it is a relation or sum of relations the conscious field 'contains' (or has as terms) both subject and object, by whose interaction it is generated. Now in the analysis of this field there are four alternatives.

(a) We may sort this bunch of relations, each of which has the form *s-o* (subject related to object), on the assumption that *o* depends on *s*, which is self-determined. We then get a world of phenomena in which everything known is generated by the subject or 'I', which is therefore primary. This of course is solipsism.

(b) We may sift through all these relations on the assumption that *s* depends on *o*, which is self-determined. We then get a world of phenomena in which everything known is generated by the object or 'external' world, which is therefore primary. This is mechanical materialism.

Either point of view lands us in difficulties. If the subject is self-determined, how does it come into existence? If the object is self-determined, how does it come to be known? If all relations (*i.e.* qualities) are not completely real but only one term is real and the other dependent and secondary, what in fact *are* the real parts of qualities? Whether we adopt position (a) or (b) we reach the depressing conclusion that no qualities are *really* real. If we are physicists, and our programme is to confine ourselves to qualities independent of the subject—objective facts—we soon find that the observer is involved in all such qualities as colour, smell, taste. Further research, such as that of relativity physics, shows us that the observer is even involved in such apparently objective qualities as size, shape, mass, motion, time, distance. In all such qualities the observer must be specified.

We finally get nothing absolute but mathematical equations, which express only the comparability of these qualities among themselves, and are therefore purely metrical. But mathematical equations are thoughts; they do not exist concretely. We are therefore back at a completely subjective world, having started out in pursuit of a completely objective world.

(b) If we are philosophers, instead of physicists, and our programme is to confine ourselves to qualities independent of the object—the *general* truths achievable by ‘pure’ thought—we soon find that the object is involved in all such apparently subjective qualities as causality, perception, thought. We finally get nothing absolute but Universals, or concepts such as Whiteness, Truth, and the like. These concepts must however exist independently of the thinker’s brain, for this brain is a particular object. These Universals must one by one be stripped of all the distinctions that arise from particularities, and thus we are left with nothing but the laws of the comparability of Ideas among themselves, in other words, with logic. We get a world in which the sole realities are Ideas or Universals existing independently of the thinker according to logical laws—the idealism of Hegel. But such a world exists independently of the subject. We are therefore back at a completely objective world, having started out in pursuit of a completely subjective one. And we are all ready to start out on another circle.

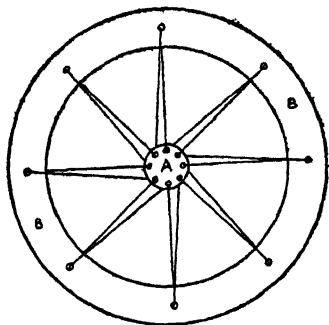
Like Fabre’s processionary caterpillars on the rim of a jam jar, we can walk that circle again and again, the most dreary captivity of thought. It is one that every philosopher has hitherto been doomed to tread, and now bourgeois physics is treading it too. It is the circle of thought divorced from action: the cage of *pure* reason.

(c) No attempts to heal the dualism by combining the two positions have been successful. Any such compromises



## REALITY

forcibly fly apart. The simplest compromise, that of Hume, Kant, Mach, Avenarius and the neo-realists, is to assert that phenomena (or *sensa*) are primary, that is, exist by themselves. But it is impossible to carry through such an argument logically, for the phenomena become completely lawless, they are simply a heap of relations, which we can take any way. Imagine a fabric being spun by a loom. If we snip the threads close to the shuttles, the whole weaving process becomes confusion, there is no pattern. How can colour generate size, size beauty, or beauty logic without the basis of the material object or subject? Such a world is not a subject either of discussion or thought, it is a mere chance collocation. The laws of science or thought are then simply convenient methods of enumerating these phenomena. One method is as good as another. There is no question of differing degrees of truth or reality. There is no meaning in the query whether one statement is *truer* than another. The most that can be claimed is that one is more economical—but it may be economical of paper, breath, thought, or bodily energy, and therefore in a paper shortage science might be completely transformed in all its hypotheses. This is not irony; it is a true statement of the Machian-Kantian position. A diagram may illustrate the problem.



## FURTHER STUDIES IN A DYING CULTURE

The centre disc, A, is the subject. The outer disc, B, is the object. The threads represent the relations between them, or the phenomena. The whole system is the developing Universe. The pattern is all formed by one thread which, running through every hole, weaves the continuous intricate system. By declaring that only phenomena are real, phenomenalism, in all its forms, snips off these threads at the holes, and it is now no longer possible to understand the laws of their spacing, tension, or interweaving.

Not all relations are known, and conscious, but by following the endless thread, we come on new relations. We follow its course by means of action to change the object whose results, summarised in scientific laws, express objective reality in terms of thought and are able to predict the course of the thread. Thus phenomenalism (positivism) is anti-scientific, for it gives us no reason to suppose that the Universe of phenomena need be linked by any relations. On the contrary such relations are declared to be unknowable. The linkage is provided by the material basis of phenomena, and positivism denies the knowability of this matter.

So clear is this difficulty, that positivism is never carried out thoroughly to the end. In Kant's critical idealism, the object is smuggled in as the unknowable thing-in-itself, and the subject as 'the categories'. In Mach the unknowable Ding-an-Sich reappears, but the subject is now smuggled in under the form of the 'most economical laws of thought', the subject being the judge of economy.

Phenomenalism does not therefore, as was supposed by the critical idealists, the positivists, and the neo-realists, reconcile the dualism of subjectivism or objectivism. It cannot in fact exist for a moment as a system, and either one or both positions have to be smuggled in, so that the system, as it develops, becomes either subjectivism or objectivism, or yet another nominal alternative. If a relation

between two terms exists, *i.e.* if the reality is A plus B, it is possible to take either A, or B, or (and this is the position of phenomenalism), we may take the *plus* alone, and claim to be reconciling the dualism. But of course we are not. We are forced in practice to join one party or the other.

(d) The final alternative is to omit the plus altogether. How then explain the knowledge by B of A, and the effect shown by A of B's actions upon A. By something that is neither B nor A, something that is outside reality—*i.e.* God. This is the philosophy of Descartes and Leibnitz. Spinoza's system has certain affinities with it, and chiefly differs in its resolute monism. According to such philosophers A and B function entirely separately, and the congruity of these functioning—Man knowing the world by thought and the world showing traces of Man's action on it—is explained by the fact that they were arranged beforehand by God, like elaborate mechanisms, so to run in time. In such a world, if the system is consistently carried out, no qualities are real, for neither subjective (mental) qualities, nor objective (material) qualities are primary. All are generated by God. The only real qualities therefore are the absolute qualities of theology—Omniscience, Omnipotence, Perfect Love, and so forth. Man and the world of colour, hope, and life are simply a shadow-show. But just as the stripping of the subjective element from objective qualities reduces them to mere equations, and the reverse process reduces them to logic, so the elimination of both subjective and objective elements in the qualities of a world from which the relations have already been excluded, leaves us with nothing but the fact that these elements are produced by an unknown outside term, or 'First Cause'. Even the theological attributes of God vanish, and we have only the uncaused Cause—another name for the self-determined primary term, which

was given in our premises. We simply take out again the empty things we put in.

Why does thought torment itself with this dualism, selecting every possible combination, yet thrown always back upon itself? And what is the solution? The second question will be answered first. The solution is dialectical materialism. Dialectical materialism goes behind subject and object to the material basis from which their antagonism arose.

(e) A and B, and the relations between them, are all real. The Universe is one, and is as a whole absolutely self-determined, but no part of it is absolutely self-determined. All that is real exists, and all that is real is determined, that is, every part of the Universe is in mutually determining A-B relations with the rest of the Universe. Everything therefore is knowable, for the meaning of knowable is simply this, the possibility of expressing a determining relation between that unknown but knowable thing, and a thing already known. This possibility is given in our premises.

This is our premise: that the Universe is a material unity, and that this is a becoming.

This material unity of becoming cannot be established by thought alone. It is established by thought in unity with practice, by thought emerging from practice and going out into practice. Phenomena are exhibited by the thing-in-itself, and if we can by practice force the thing-in-itself to exhibit phenomena according to our desire, then we know this much about the thing-in-itself—that in certain circumstances it will exhibit certain phenomena.

This is positive knowledge about the thing-in-itself. When we can in practice achieve all possible transformations we have all possible knowledge about the thing-in-itself. Thus we prove that the Universe is a material unity by proving in practice the material basis of all phenomena.

## REALITY

This material basis is the thing-in-itself, or the like content of any phenomena exhibited by the thing-in-itself. This proof of material unity is secured by change and is therefore a process of becoming, of differentiation, of the emergence of the new. But it is a proof of unity, of the sameness, likeness, or determinism in all phenomena.

'The point is to change the world, not to interpret it.' For it is not possible to interpret the world, except by changing it. Thus the impasse of philosophers is seen to be the impasse of philosophy, and a proof of the impossibility of interpreting the world by thought alone.

A-B do not exist as eternally discrete entities. The Universe is a becoming, a development. The becoming is primary. Reality does not become *in* time and space, but time and space are aspects of its becoming. Becoming is change. If a thing is changed, it manifests an unlike, a hitherto non-present quality. If change is real, and by our premises it is primary, such a quality does not come into existence either by the gradual decrement of a known quality to nothing, or the gradual increment of a very faint quality to something. Before, it was not, not in any way. Now it is, in every way. There has therefore been a 'jump'. To deny this is to deny the reality of change, and to suggest that the quality was already there, but so faintly we did not 'notice it'. But nothing new would then have come into being. There would therefore have been no change, and reality is, by our definition, change.

Although such a quality is new, it is not arbitrary, *i.e.* absolutely self-determined. By definition the Universe is one. A quality that is self-determined is, as we saw, unknowable. Therefore each new quality, as it leaps into existence, is determined by all qualities up till then present in the Universe.

These qualities do not come into being in time. Time does

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not flow on while they emerge. The emergence of such qualities is what time is. Time then is an aspect of, or abstraction from, change. Time is new quality as it emerges.

But change does not merely involve the coming into existence of qualities. If we find different qualities lying about, even though they mutually determine each other, we cannot say 'something has changed'. The qualities may be qualities of different things, and so there will have been no change. There must therefore be something in all qualities that remains the same, even though these qualities are new, otherwise we cannot say, the 'Universe has changed'. There must be something like in all unlikes. Otherwise we could say, 'these unlikes are not *changed* things, they are *different* things. We have not moved in time, but in space.' How else can we distinguish motion in time from motion in space, unless time is not something in which things change, but the change itself?

But if the newness of quality, the unlikeness, as it emerges, is time, the oldness, the likeness, is space. Qualities do not arrange themselves homogeneously in space, space is the homogeneity in their qualities. Space is quantity or known quality as it remains unchanged; it is therefore the thing-in-itself, the material unity of the Universe. The Universe is a spatial Universe. Space therefore is an aspect of matter, which is precisely what relativity physics has established by practice. Mass-energy, or the likeness in phenomena, generates space. This is established by practice.

All laws of development, of evolution, of difference, of quality, of æsthetics, of consciousness, are temporal. All laws of conservation, of metrics, of comparability, of universal and unchanging relations, are spatial.

But time and space are only aspects of becoming or change. If we could completely abstract time or space, and divide relations into a set entirely temporal, and a set

entirely spatial, we should have two absolutely self-determined spheres, contradicting our premises for each sphere would be unknowable to the other sphere. Therefore no absolute time or space, as premised in Newtonian dynamics, exists. We know both time and space and prove this by their mutual convertibility, by the change of qualities and the reproduction of quantities.

Neither does an absolute spatio-temporal *continuum* expressible in purely metrical terms exist. Such a continuum would after all be purely spatial, for it would be expressible entirely in terms of quantity. It would be self-determined, and independent of all quality. It would therefore be unknowable to quality, and quality would be unknowable to it. Hence Einstein's relativity physics still contains an illegitimate absolute, which accounts for its being irreconcilable with quantum phenomena.

We take as our premise 'becoming', the becoming of a material unity which is generated by our transformation of matter. Becoming, which involves change, which involves like and unlike, involves also *development*. If we had no development, we would have no 'becoming'. In development there is a relation between the qualities A, B, C, D, E, which is not only mutually determining, but such that A is in some way contained in B, B in C, C in D, and D in E, but not E in D, D in C, C in B, B in A. This relation, which is technically called 'transitive but assymetrical', is involved in the process of becoming, just as are the existence of like and unlike. If becoming were otherwise, if qualities could not all be ranged in this unique order, we should come upon groups of qualities such, for example, that A would be contained in B, and then B in A; or in some other way there would be a 'break', or return to a quality in which all the new qualities of the interim no longer appear. But such a return is indistinguishable from the previous situation, and

therefore we no longer have a process of becoming, but of unbecoming. Moreover the relation of containing and being-contained is, in development, mutually determining. If therefore the series of qualities (or events) in any way returns on itself in this fashion, the Universe splits in two 'in time'. We have two or more sets of self-determined qualities, sufficient to themselves, each knowable and non-existent to the other.

We now see that the determination of qualities as they appear is a relation of a special sort. It is a transitive assymetrical relation known as 'cause and effect', in which one quality mutually determines another in a way which may be described as the containing (or sublation) of one quality in another. And all qualities (or events) may, by this means, be ranged in a unique order.

Moreover since no set of qualities is self-determined, we can never have a set of distinguishable qualities such that *A alone* determines or is contained in *B*; *B alone* determines or is contained in *C*, and so on, otherwise the series *A, B, C*, would be self-determined and unknowable. This would only be permissible if this series were the Universe. But we do not regard the Universe as composed of one event at a time. We do not believe that, whatever cross-section we took of the mass of qualities that we call the Universe, we would reveal over all the sections one quality only. If we could do that, space would then be separable from time, and we could collect spatial and temporal qualities in self-determined sets, which is contrary to our premises and experience. This cross-section would correspond to a universal or absolute present, which is permitted to Newtonian dynamics but is rightly eliminated from relativity physics.

Since then this series is impermissible, the qualities are always arranged as follows: *A* and *A*<sup>1</sup> contained in *B*. *B* and



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$B^1$ , contained in  $C$ .  $A^2$  and  $A^3$  contained in  $B_1$ . The only arrangement which will now completely satisfy all our premises is that each new quality, as it emerges, is determined by another quality (subject or *antithesis*) and the rest of the Universe (object or *thesis*). This does not apply merely to the qualities of cognition but to all events. In older formulations of causality, it would be stated that each 'event' (new quality) has a 'cause' (prior quality) and a 'ground' (the rest of the Universe). The ground is currently omitted for reasons of economy. For example, we say a bell is the cause of a sound. The air, earth, fixed stars must, however, be as they are in order for the bell to produce the sound. Any general scientific law must contain Universal constants. This is recognised by modern relativity physics (p) and quantum physics (h).

This then leads to the dialectical law of becoming, applicable to all qualities, that is, to all events. Any new quality, as it emerges, is determined by (or 'contains') a prior quality (the cause) and the rest of the Universe of qualities. Or, more strictly—since becoming is logically prior to time and space—the two terms determining a quality, (a) the prior quality and (b) all other determining qualities, are to that quality cause and ground, and contain its past time and its surrounding space. All other qualities not contained in this way are part of its effect, and contain its future time. It is this relation which enables us to settle causality and time and space, which are never absolute, but relative to a quality.

Logically we express this as follows. Every new quality (B) is the synthesis of an opposition between (A) the cause, prior quality or *thesis*, and its negation (not-A), or *antithesis*—the rest of the Universe of qualities existent in relation to A. This dialectical movement does not take place in Time and Space, but Time and Space are abstractions from it.

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Thus time not only is an abstraction of the unlikeness in qualities, but is also and therefore the abstraction of the assymetrical relations between them which leave time open and 'infinite', and make its process and its arrangement unique, so that we cannot conceive the past in the future, or yesterday to-morrow, or ourselves going backwards in time. To go backwards in time would be to shed those qualities which contain the past, layer after layer, till we reach the past. But all that retraced 'shed' past, now no longer being in determining relations with the past-become-present, would cease to exist, and we should not have gone backwards in time. Or to go backwards in time would be to come again on to the qualities of the past which, contained in the present, now also contain the present, so that we revolve in a self-determined circle like a needle stuck in a gramophone record, and can therefore know nothing outside that circle, either past or future. We and the 'outside' would be non-existent to each other.

Space is not only an abstraction of the likeness in qualities, but it is also and therefore an abstraction of the symmetrical relations between them which make space closed and finite, and makes its process and its arrangement *non-unique*, so that we cannot conceive one part of space being *different* from another part, nor our being *unable* to retrace our steps over any distance we have traversed, just as we cannot conceive one part of time being *like* another part, nor of our being *able* to go back over any portion of time we have traversed. For if the qualities A, B, C, D, and E are assymetrically transitive, so that A is contained in B, B in C, and C in D, and D in A, there is a common relation to all events—in this particular series it is A, for if A is in B, and B is in C, and C is in D, and D is in E, A must be in E. A therefore is the spatial relation or likeness in development. It is that which develops, just as the

unlike elements are the qualities exhibited by it in its development.

Every quality is an event; every event is a quality. Every quality of event is a relation between the subject A, and the object not-A—the rest of the Universe. The simplest quality (or event) is a quantum, in which there is a relation between the electron A, and the rest of the Universe not-A. Relations peculiar to A and general to the Universe must therefore both figure in the complete specification of a quantum. A quantum is the most temporal quality we can abstract, just as the interval is the most spatial.

Development does not take place *in* time and space. Development, becoming, and change, *secrete* time and space. Time and space are abstractions of it. Memory exhibits the assymetrical transitive relations we have mentioned, so does experience. They are therefore more concrete, nearer to reality and to becoming, than abstract time or space, or even the abstract spatio-temporal continuum. Learning, growth and evolution are not qualities absolutely peculiar to life; they are what we call becoming in its living aspects. Becoming includes both spatial finity and temporal infinity.

We now see that there is a universal dialectic of reality, a mode of movement which is prior to time, space, life and all other events and qualities. This dialectic proceeds as follows. First we have a quality. But a quality is a relation between subject and object, between A, subject, and not-A, the rest of the Universe. But the rest of the Universe not-A, has as its object A, to A it is subject and to it A is the rest of the Universe. The most 'primitive' quality we take therefore has two terms and a relation, this relation is involved in 'becoming' and ensures that the process of reality is open and 'infinite' at both ends.

Our most infinite regress into the past brings us therefore

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to a quality, to an event. We cannot imagine anything simpler, for such a simplex one-term thing would be absolutely self-determined and could not be known-by-us, since knowing is a mutually determining relation between us and the thing. Any known event is already a quality, is already a subject-object relation. It already involves within itself an antagonism which can generate the means by which it is known.

We may take either term as primary and the other as dependent on it. Since we can take either term as primary, neither can be primary. They may be regarded as simultaneous. But they are not independent terms, for they are connected by a relation. The simplest quality therefore reveals itself as a subject-object relation. But the process of becoming involves that a new quality emerges (or event occurs) not by the increment of something already there, but abruptly, exhibiting something altogether unlike. But it also involves that this new state contains the first old quality in addition to the unlike new. This new state or quality is also analyseable as a two-term relation, and must in turn be succeeded by a new quality.

In other words, the fundamental mode of motion is a state, revealed to contain a thesis and an antithesis each of which is all that is not the other (are opposites), and yet neither are self-determined but are on the contrary, in mutually determining relation (unity of opposites). This is the thesis and antithesis. This state must give place to another, containing both the old quality (A and B) and yet an unlike element C. This is the synthesis. This quality, when it reveals its dualism, no longer reveals the dualism A and B, for this dualism parted between it (relation of subject to rest of Universe) the *whole* of reality. There is now newness, so therefore the same portioning of reality can no longer reveal the same dualism. The old dualism is therefore

'reconciled' in the new synthesis C, which itself however can now be analysed as a two-term relation, the foundation of another movement.

Quantity is the comparison of qualities among themselves. For this to be possible, they must all have a common element of likeness. Yet this likeness, constantly, by the dialectic movement, gives birth to the new. Quantity becomes quality, yet remains quantity. This movement guarantees the determinism of becoming, but not its pre-determinism. The predeterminism of becoming is a nightmare arising from mechanical materialism.

This movement is not imposed on becoming by thought. It is the only way becoming can really become, conformably to our reason and experience; and it is in our reason because our experience is part of this becoming. This movement contains within it time and space, memory and perception, quality and quantity, all of which entities are abstractions from it. Time is the difference between synthesis and the preceding relation, space is the similarity between them. The dialectic movement of the Universe does not occur in space and time, it gives rise to them. The external world does not impose dialectic on thought, nor does thought impose it on the external world. The relation between subject and object, ego and Universe, is itself dialectic. Man, when he attempts to think metaphysically, merely contradicts himself, and meanwhile continues to live and experience reality *dialectically*.

Knowledge of reality can only be generated when subject and object attack each other dialectically, each changing the other in the process. The change of the object is man's transformation of nature. The change of the subject is knowledge. Thus dialectical materialism heals the subject-object dualism, not by denying one (idealism or mechanical materialism) or both (positivism) but by making this

antagonism the creative source of knowledge, as an active relation in which both man's theory and practice are generated.

We thus see that the dualism that torments philosophy, the dualism between the mind and nature, between the subject and object, between the ego and the external world, is the analysis of a quality, or the two-term relation, which is not unique to mind but part of the process of becoming. The same dual relation describes the relation between a quantum and its surroundings. We make the problem needlessly difficult by making our 'A' term, not any particular human brain but men's brains in general, and 'not-A' not Nature at any particular time but nature throughout the past. The dialectic relation still retains its essential form, but is difficult to analyse fruitfully. It is quite legitimate to do this, but it is simpler to take one human brain in particular, or even a particular set of relations such as perception. The basic dialectic remains the same, and the analysis is now simpler.

The question of which is first, mind or matter, is not therefore a question of which is first, subject or object. Every discernment of a quality (mind, truth, colour, size) is the discernment of a two-term relation between a thing as subject and the rest of the Universe. Mind is the general name for a relation between the human body, as subject, and the rest of the Universe. The human body is a general name for a relation between the rest of the Universe, as subject, and the mind, as object. Mind is a loose name for such relations holding with all such human bodies (or including perhaps the bodies of animals) just as body is a loose name for such relations holding with all minds. Going back in the Universe along the dialectic of qualities we reach by inference a state where no human or animal bodies existed and therefore no minds. It is not strictly accurate to say

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that therefore the object is prior to the subject any more than it is correct to say the opposite. Object and subject, as exhibited by the mind relation, come into being simultaneously. Human body, mind, and human environment cannot exist separately, they are all parts of the one set. What is prior is the material unity from which they arise as an inner antagonism.

We can say that relations seen by us between qualities in our environment (the arrangement of the cosmos, energy, mass, all the entities of physics) existed before the subject-object relationship implied in mind. We prove this by the transformations which take place independent of our desires. In this sense nature is prior to mind and this is the vital sense for science. These qualities produced, as cause and ground produce effect, the synthesis, or particular subject-object relationship which we call knowing. Nature therefore produced mind. But the nature which produced mind was not nature 'as seen by us', for this is importing into it the late subject-object relationship called 'mind'. It is nature as known by us, that is, as having indirect not direct relations with us. It is nature in determining relation with, but not part of, our contemporary universe. Yet, by sublation, this nature that produced mind is contained in the universe of which the mind relation is now a feature; and that is why it is known to us.

Such a view of reality reconciles the endless dualism of mentalism or objectivism. It is the Universe of dialectical materialism. Unlike previous philosophies it includes all reality; it includes not only the world of physics, but it includes smells, tastes, colours, the touch of a loved hand, hopes, desires, beauties, death and life, truth and error. In such a view all things pass away, for all things must change, and yet nothing passes away, for the past is sublated in the future. Such a world is finite and infinite; it contains both.

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All other philosophies split on this rock, that they contain self-determined spheres of qualities, whether this be the continuum of Einstein (for relativity physics is a philosophy) or the world of Ideas of Plato, or the world of sensory data of Berkeley, or the world of 'values' of axiologists. But one is then driven into the difficulty that here on the one side one has a self-determined sphere of values, tensors, ideas, or *sensa*, not in relation with all other nameable qualities on the other side. Therefore one of these two spheres is primary and real, and the other secondary and unreal, or not *really* real. In the world of physics for instance, smells, colours, hardnesses and shapes are not *really* real. But the reality of dialectical materialism is competent to include all these qualities as real, for all are in mutually determining relations with each other. There is no closed world of art, physics, morals, or mind. All these worlds are open, and are part of the one causality and process; and of no quality must it be said 'this is an appearance or an illusion'. Such a world includes as real not only all truths, but all errors, yet error remains opposed to and distinguishable from truth. Such a world includes future and past, but the future remains opposed to and distinguishable from the past.

Moreover, such a world of reality, although it contains all qualities and all experience and has no closed parts, is yet *as a whole* self-determined. It requires for its movement no unknowable forces, general indeterminism, or mysterious gods. It is free in itself. Precisely because it contains in itself no closed worlds and in it truth and error, being and not-being, mutually determine each other, it is not itself determined. Such a Universe is therefore monistic and pluralistic, just as it is finite and infinite. Its future is not fully predictable, because if the unlikenesses in qualities were predictable, they would not be new. But its future is fully determined, because if the quantities of the future



were not like those of the present it would no longer be one Universe of becoming.

In such a Universe thought is real; it plays a real rôle; but matter is real. Thought is a relation of matter; but the relation is real; it is not only real but determining. It is real *because* it is determining. Mind is a determining set of relations between the matter in my body and in the rest of the Universe. It is not all the set, for not all the necessities whereby my body and the rest of the Universe mutually determine each other is known to me, not all my being is conscious being. In so far as these relations are conscious, I am free, for to be free is to have one's conscious volition, determine the relations between the Universe and oneself. The more these relations between my body and the Universe are part of my conscious volition the more I am free. These relations are necessary or determining relations. Freedom is the consciousness of necessity.

This is the theory of dialectical materialism which is itself the outcome of a dialectical movement. A philosophy is generated in society and is therefore the outcome of a social movement. The early mechanical materialism of Descartes and Hobbes, strengthened by Condillac and d'Holbach and accepted as the official methodology of physics, produced its opposite, idealism, and this reached its climax with absolute idealism. Absolute idealism is the apex of bourgeois philosophy, and all succeeding philosophies are either pedestrian recapitulations of earlier philosophies or simple eclecticism. There has been no noteworthy bourgeois philosopher since Hegel. For these two opposing bourgeois philosophies, by their very contradictions, gave rise to their synthesis, dialectical materialism. This was the outcome of classical bourgeois philosophy. It synthesised these elements not by a rigid formalism but by proceeding *beyond* philosophy, by becoming a sociology and exhibiting how both

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mechanical materialism and objective idealism were generated, as a social product, in social action upon reality through economic production.

Dialectical materialism was itself an outcome of the contradictions of capitalist economy. When communism and dialectical materialism emerged, all the discoveries of bourgeois science that made such a view of the Universe necessary now began to distort the framework of bourgeois culture, so that it could no longer hold the forces it had generated and bourgeois theory became a brake instead of an aid to action and discovery. Relativity and quantum physics, experimental psychology, evolution and genetics, anthropology, comparative religion, are a few of the disruptive forces in modern culture, which necessarily give rise to semi-dialectical philosophies, to incomplete attempts at synthesising the anarchy of bourgeois thought. The characteristic of the relation of bourgeois theory to practice in science is, that the more general the theory, the more it is a hindrance to practice; the more detailed and particular it is, the less it acts as a distorting force.

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Neo-Realism (or neo-Platonism) is, in its various forms, but a late development of phenomenism or positivism. Concepts of 'organisation', entelechy, closed spheres of value and the like, merely represent the veering of positivism towards objective idealism and mentalism. It is easy enough to see that such philosophies do not heal dualism, and do not give any thorough-going reality to all classes of experience. Whitehead, Russell, the gestalt psychologists, Eddington, Jeans, Broad, and the many others only differ in their capacities for logic, or the narrowness of their aims and content. It is not really possible to sit on the fence in bourgeois dualism. Sooner or later one finds oneself on one side and to-day that

side is always idealism, never mechanical materialism. Of course such late bourgeois idealism has never the scope or coherence of Hegelian Idealism, just because all the old confidence has gone. The bourgeois no longer really believes in himself or in his theory.

Morgan and Alexander may be bracketed as leaders of a popular philosophy which really found its pioneer in Spencer and its most subtle exponent in Bergson. Impressed by the fact of biological evolution, a concrete proof of the transformability of matter, that life has a dialectical history, such philosophers attempt to forge a dialectical 'theory of life' which takes the following form: New unpredictable qualities appear as jumps. Thus, 'liquidity' represents one jump, 'life' another, 'mind' a third, and so forth. These qualities *emerge*.

Such a philosophy collapses, however, because these qualities, or jumps, are *imposed*. They do not result from qualities which are two-termed relations, whose terms, by their repulsion, created the synthetic quality that 'emerges'. Mind is a simple one-term quality without relation: such qualities are not therefore after all *real*. In spite of the desperate attempts of such philosophers to save sensory data, *sensa* remain secondary and unreal. Moreover time and space are not the dialectical change. They are (according to Alexander) the matrices in which the change takes place. As with Plato, space is the womb of all becoming.

Thus, instead of a world of becoming in which all unfolds itself with complete determinism, because all phenomena are materially real, we have a world unfolded in time and space by the Jack-in-the-box appearance of new and unpredictable qualities. Such a philosophy is incompetent to explain society or the generation either of itself or other philosophies. It cannot heal dualism.

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It gives rise to the question, if these qualities are not determined but imposed, who imposes them? We thus return to a very early philosophy, to a god determining but himself self-determined, outside the Universe, who arbitrarily pumps in these qualities into a passive world. It makes no difference whether, as with Bergson, such a god exists now or, as with Alexander, such a god exists in the future and is continually attracting these qualities out of the world, as the sun raises blisters on the skin.

These new bourgeois evolutionary philosophies which start out to be dialectical and scientific, end by being less so than the older bourgeois philosophies. The world becomes an amorphous mass lying in Time and Space with no determining relations between its phenomena, for all values are imposed upon it in an arbitrary way, as if it were a piece of dough. Such philosophies fail in their primary motive, that of synthesising bourgeois philosophy. Should anyone wish to have the melancholy proof to this, they need only read Alexander's *Space, Time and Deity*, which proves his philosophy to be inadequate even to contain relativity physics.

Indeed, unless such a philosophy can penetrate to the seat of bourgeois dualism—its genesis in the society that produced it—it cannot escape from dualism. It cannot reconcile dualism, any more than the separate boughs of a tree can be 'reconciled' if we cannot see the trunk. Mechanical materialism and absolute idealism represent the extremest possible antithesis of bourgeois dualism, and any philosophy which does not reconcile them is doomed to be a less *logical* philosophy. Bergson is as good an example as any of the bourgeois who, striving to escape from bourgeois categories, in fact falls back into them. He attempts to describe an evolutionary world, but at the end, all he has is a static

world, whose mass is moved on by an external *élan vital*. He attempts to describe a world in which Time is real, because the past is conserved in the present. But his past conserved in the present is a world in which Time is unreal, because the qualities which make the past present are not temporal, they are products of an outside force, *Life*, and Time therefore becomes merely the empty stage of their exhibition.

Bergson attempts to describe a world in which mind has significance, and is real, but he creates a world in which mind, because it is separate from matter and plays on it as organ, is a *complete machine without* mind. All sensa, all values, and all qualities are *either* not in the world, and are therefore an unreal façade, *or* are in the world, in which case they are not mental. He endeavours to pose intuition as a synthesis of instinct and intelligence. He attempts to escape from metaphysical dualism, and the weakness of formal logic—that nothing emerges which is not already there—but he only does so by demarcating instinct and intelligence as if they were entirely separate things. But this is not so; all instincts have intelligent modifications, and are conditioned by experience. All intelligence utilizes organic instruments (the brain, existing reflexes). The difference is a matter of degree. By making it *absolute*, Bergson achieves as his new term, *intuition*. What is his intuition? Exactly what he is trying to escape from—scholasticism! Intuition, as Bergson visualises it, solves problems ‘by pure thought’, and not as problems are in fact solved—by instinct, modified by experience, becoming increasingly conscious and therefore increasingly *intelligent*. Now this solving of problems without modification by practice, is precisely the method of metaphysics and logic—of all the rationalism which Bergson rightly condemns for its sterility. Thus Bergson’s intuition is not a synthesis of two contradictions. The contradiction

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is not between instinct and intelligence, but between instinctive action and conscious thought, and the synthesis is science, a positive activity which on the one hand changes the world to man's instinctive desires and, on the other hand changes man by making him more conscious of reality. But Bergson, revolting against metaphysics, produces simply an extreme form of rationalism, his 'intuition'.

All these late bourgeois philosophies fail in this one elementary requirement:

(1) 'Do they explain (that is, *include*) all the scientific discoveries of their era, in the one framework?'

Not one of them is competent to do this. There are two other requirements:

(2) 'Do they include, as real and unified, all forms of experience—colours, sounds, values, aims, time, space and change?'

(3) 'Do they account, not only for these, but for the evolution of all the various arts, sciences, and religions in their historical evolution, and for their own explanation of them? In other words, do they explain not only the objects of experience, but the evolution of explanations of these objects, both in their truth and their falsity?'

Obviously a philosophy which achieves these goals has transformed itself into a sociology, but it is a measure of the poverty of bourgeois philosophy that not only does it fail in all attempts at solving the first question, but the very need to solve the other two hardly presents itself. When one views, in their contemporary cultures, the achievements of Descartes, Locke, Spinoza, Kant and Hegel, it is possible to realise how far-reaching has been the dissolution of bourgeois culture. It is even possible for M. Maritain, speaking as a Thomist, to hurl insults at contemporary bourgeois philosophy:

'The drama of Western culture consists in the fact that its

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stock of common metaphysics has been reduced to an utterly inadequate minimum, so that only matter holds it together, and matter is incapable of keeping anything together.'

It is not either matter or metaphysics that is responsible for the decomposition of bourgeois culture, but the social anarchy rooted in its economy. But whatever the cause, this decomposition has now advanced to a stage where a Scholastic philosopher can reproach the bourgeois philosophers with a 'betrayal' of reason and with an 'incoherent' world-view. Would not Newton, Galileo, Bacon and Descartes turn in their graves if they knew the time had come when a medievalist could reproach their heirs with a 'betrayal of reason?' Nothing could reveal more clearly the retrogression of bourgeois philosophy.

Because bourgeois intellectual confusion is rooted in the form of society of which it is a product, it cannot attain to the consistent world-view of dialectical materialism without seeing what is the law of motion of this society that produces bourgeois philosophy, and what will be its outcome. But when one has seen that, one has ceased to be a bourgeois; one no longer stands in one's own light and can see bourgeois culture clearly. One has become a Communist.

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This transition, which involves understanding in oneself all the formulas and conventions imposed by one's bourgeois upbringing and deriving therefrom something more fundamental, is not easy. Thus many even of those people who see clearly the bankruptcy of capitalism, and the analytical power of Marxism, are unable to grasp the synthesis. They remain bourgeois, and therefore they impose on themselves the task of 'improving' or 'modifying' dialectical materialism. They propose to bring it 'up-to-date', by modifying it

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according to the lessons learned from recent scientific development.

They do not see that such a programme is simply one of making dialectical materialism bourgeois—making it moreover not *classical* bourgeois, which could merely mean dissolving it into the Hegelianism or mechanical materialism of which it is the outcome, but *degenerate* bourgeois, making it Bergsonian or Machian. They do not see that the task *vis-à-vis* dialectical materialism and the latest developments of bourgeois science is not that of bringing dialectical materialism up to date, but that of bringing these anarchic developments up to date by synthesising them in the consistent world-view of Marxism. This is obvious, for on the one hand one has a coherent system—dialectical materialism—and on the other hand one has a chaotic confusion of ‘discoveries’—relativity physics, quantum physics, Freudism, anthropology, genetics, psycho-physiology, which are based on exclusive assumptions and contradict or ignore each other. If there is to be any relation between these two groups at all, obviously dialectical materialism must impose its coherence on the mish-mash, and not the mish-mash its incoherence on dialectical materialism. The second programme is simply pointless. It would be better to leave things as they are.

Of course in practice all who set themselves the second programme perform it in a typically bourgeois way. Whatever the particular closed world of bourgeois ideology they inhabit—physics, psychology, economic, philosophy, art, or religion—it is the limited and exclusive categories of the world they would enforce on the universal categories of dialectical materialism. The dialectical materialism so ‘improved’ is not only therefore now inadequate to take in all the other closed worlds that this particular bourgeois renovator does not inhabit, but soon proves itself as in-



capable as ordinary bourgeois philosophy of dealing completely even with the closed world in which resides the expert in modernising. Necessarily so, for the closed world is just the characteristic of bourgeois bankruptcy.

To return to the question with which this essay began: Can physics, in its final stages of relativity, be restored to the world of real experience? Can I, as I live, remember, think, move, see and act, find in that concrete immediate experience the refined concepts of relativity physics? Not only can I, but I *must*, for relativity physics is extracted from perception and experience, just as is Newtonian physics. The fall of an apple, the passage of light, the motion of earth and sun, the weight of objects, all these experienced *perceived* realities gave a common content to Newtonian and Einsteinian hypothesis. But there was also a difference, and this too owed its existence to an experience—to the Michelson-Morley experiment. And the confirmation of the later theory was due to experience, to seen things, the precession of the perihelion of Mercury, the bending of light rays by gravitation, and the gain in mass of  $w$  particles. Therefore all the entities of this physics whose form could be determined by experience, must exist in experience.

I live, therefore I think I am. I have experience whether I perceive or reflect and this is common to both feelings, that *I endure*. 'I', a thing that remains unchanged. But this 'I' endures; it *lives*. It sees, suffers, thinks of things that are not the same, for sometimes it has suffering, sometimes joy. Sometimes it sees one thing, sometimes another. And yet it is always the 'I', the unchanging thing, that sees and suffers. So that this always like 'I', is also unlike; continually new things emerge and yet my perception of these things shows the same element in their behaviour to me. They too endure, and yet they change. Always there is a like perpetually

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manifesting unlike; continually there is unlikeness revealing a like. This is experience, or *becoming*.

Becoming, because I *remember*. First I suffered, then I rejoiced, then I feared. Suffering, I did not know of the rejoicing or the fear. Rejoicing, I 'remembered' the suffering, it tinged my rejoicing; but I did not yet know fear. Fearing at last, I remembered that I had rejoiced with a memory of suffering, and suffered but with no memory of fear or rejoicing. All my feelings could be arranged in that order, in which the subsequent included memories of the precedent, but not *vice versa*. This order of feelings I called 'Time'. Every item in it had this unlikeness which yet could by memory range them in a unique order.

But not my perceptions of things. These things had an order among themselves. I could go to a thing, and then walk to another thing, and then it appeared that, exactly retracing my steps, I could come on the original thing. *Exactly retracing my steps*; here was a difference. For I could experience a thing; then experience another thing; then return to the original thing and yet remember not only my experience of another thing, but my earlier experience of the original thing. Thus I had no unique endless order, but a closed order which I could repeat in endless ways. All these repetitions, these recurrences, could be ranged in this likeness upon unlikeness. I called this 'Space'.

And now I was able to distinguish more sharply between my own feelings, which were always in Time, in a unique order, and things, which were ranged in Space, in an order not unique but closed.

I was inclined to separate Time from Space, and my feelings from things; but this was wrong. They were different; they were opposite; but how could I say they were exclusive, for the relations between them were just what experience was? Every experience contained a *feeling*, a

newness, a knowledge that Time had moved on, and a *thing*, an oldness, a knowledge that I had met this before. I who had the feelings of difference, yet remained I. I remained I because I myself was a thing—a body. The *things*, whose relations remained repeatable and non-unique, *caused* the change in my *feelings*. Every experience contained subject and object, time and space. I discovered I could never separate them in experience. How could the statement that they were absolutely separate therefore have meaning? Moreover Time and Space always contained an experience or relation between things. How then could the statement that things had relations *in* Time and Space, conceived as neutral containers, have meaning? It was just my experience in my relations with things, which gave me my ideas of time-relations and space-relations. How could these relations exist without terms, as things-in-themselves? If I made this mistake (and for a time I did make it) it was one for which I had no warrant. It led me into all kinds of paradoxes, so I gave it up, and set out to measure and classify and compare, not happenings *in* Time and Space, but the time and space *in* happenings.

How did I carry out this important task? First of all by the invention of numbers. All qualities, all elements in the flux of experience, are *becoming*. There is a likeness, a something that changes, and an unlikeness, the changefulness of this thing. Moreover there are not merely bundles of likeness and unlikeness, but all qualities can be arranged in a unique order, such that event A is 'memorably' contained in B, event B in C, event C in D. This 'nesting' of events involves that there is something common to all events. Thus, in the series just named, quality A is common to all events. Experience never finds an end to the events in either direction.

This gives us the series of integers; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc. The

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series in dialectic; each number synthesises (memorably contains) every previous number, and yet contains a new quality, for how otherwise could we differentiate it? This series is thus adequate to describe all quantities, for it describes the essential process of becoming.

But the series is not unique. 2 may be determined by 1 and 1, or  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{3}{2}$ , and so on. Each quality is then the limit of an infinite number of different possible series.

Let us take two things—two *likenesses*. We take a thing *here*, where I am now, and a thing *there* where I am not now. We measure the number of like events between these things. For example we ourselves pace backwards and forwards (9 steps on each journey, 9 events). This is a like relation. The original thing returned to after our pacing has changed, but because there is a likeness recognisable beneath the change we call it 'the same thing'.

Thus space becomes a relation between ourself and things. We pace between things. We never find distance except as a relation between ourselves and things (ourselves pacing, measuring, and watching). Distance becomes the measurement of like events among themselves by us.

Just because the two sets of nine like events also had an element of unlike and were arranged inclusively in our memory in the series 1-9 and 10-18, they were valid as a measurement of like things. Thus we find an element of unlikeness in all our relations of like things determining them. Time always figures in space.

We decide to find how *little* time need figure in space. Time is the element of unlikeness, what is the minimum? In the pacing of like events forward or back between things, there is always this unlikeness. The fewer the events, the less the unlikeness. We find that of all relations involving likeness and unlikeness, the light ray can mediate between things with the least unlikeness in contemporary events.

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This relation, the light relation, is therefore the most spatial relation between events. It is a minimum relation. A minimum relation is unique. We therefore have a minimum relation which, when it occurs between two things, involves the least element of unlikeness between all other related qualities in the world. This minimum relation we call *zero interval*, but, discovering the same relation in a different sphere, we call this minimum relation the *quantum*. Zero interval is the least unlikeness in the Universe which will differentiate 'between' things, and make them different in space. The quantum is the least unlikeness in things which will integrate a thing and make it the same in time.

What is the most temporal relation? It is that relation which has the most likeness in it. But we recognise things as 'knots' of likeness. Therefore the greatest possible likeness in relations inheres *within* what we call a thing. While qualities are emerging in experience, those which show most likeness have as their relation maximum interval, which is the most spatial relation. We say, *this thing follows a geodesic*. The geodesic relation is the relation a thing's qualities have among themselves and therefore it is the most temporal relation. Discovering the same relation in a different sphere, we call it an *electron*.

But now we close the circle. This likeness is only evidenced in a bunch of relations. It is an *intersection* of qualities; the most like element in them. But in each quality, because we can distinguish between the qualities, there is an unlikeness. The electron never exists in itself, always it is manifesting unlikenesses. But the light interval, although it connects two *different* things, yet *connects* them, and therefore is the result of an element of likeness in its opposed terms.

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What world follows from all this?

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(a) Time and space are the way we sort the qualities in which material things participate. Each sorting is different for each thing; therefore each has its own time and space. There is nothing outside this emergence of qualities, not even relations, for every quality contains a subject, a relation, and an object (the rest of the Universe). These qualities are discontinuous and have a minimum, the quantum or the light ray, and a maximum, the characteristic of following a geodesic and being matter, but neither is separate from the other. The quantum is the unit of time, the electron of space, but each is involved in the other, each emerges from the one material becoming of experience.

All these qualities, according to their difference and likeness, can be sorted in a unique series: *i.e.* the Universe is *completely* determined. The series nowhere holds back on itself; no sphere is self-determined. The series is not time; time emerges from the subject-object analysis; time is contained in the series, but only as the 'perspective' of one particle. This is true also of space.

Time, like space, is three-dimensional (past, present, future). But because time is an accretion of unlikenesses, these three dimensions always distinguish themselves. Those of space must be distinguished, because space is an accretion of likenesses. That is why wave mechanics requires six dimensions to describe the relation of two electrons, for there is never a relation between two electrons only, but between an electron and the rest of the world.

This is the world of experience as seen by dialectical materialism. It is not only a world of experience, but also a world of biology, psychology, sociology, art and physics. Not only is it the world of relativity physics, but it is also, and at the same time, the world of quantum physics.

The world, in the process of becoming, exhibits an accumulation of unlikeness. Likeness has as one aspect

*organisation.* This increase of unlikeness appears therefore, as an increase of disorganisation. This is the 'entropy gradient,' the basis of the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

It is maintained by bourgeois physics, however, that a Universal return from disorder to order, *i.e.* a return of the series from A includes B, B includes C, to C includes B is not impossible, but only grossly improbable. This is based on a misunderstanding, due to the concept of Time as the matrix of becoming.

Time is in fact the inclusive series of unlike qualities such that A includes B, and B includes C. Consequently it is by definition impossible to talk of such a series returning on itself in time, for Time is the non-returning of the series. The last of such a series that returned would be 'past'.

If anyone could define Time in any other way, so as to produce a more consistent world-view and upset our experience and the discoveries of relativity physics, then that would no longer be the case. But until they do reach such a formulation, no meaning can be assigned to a Universe which returns to a previous order from disorder. It is not extremely improbable, but impossible, for it is a contradiction in terms. If it happened, or could be shown to be possible, it would indicate, not only that our present definition of Time is wrong but also what Time really is.

The physicist, confronted by a small-scale infringement of the law—*e.g.* gas gathering into half of a receptacle and leaving the other in a vacuum, would reason in this way: 'Here is disorder becoming order, which is just what cannot happen since it means the time in this receptacle has, so to speak, gone backwards in comparison to my time. I therefore conclude that in fact it has not gone back, and that there is a subsequencey about the local accumulation of a gas, which can only mean that it is *part* of a larger increase in unlikeness or disorder. In other words I must assume

that this gas must have been acted upon by forces outside itself, and that there is an outside cause for this behaviour. If not, it is my time that has gone backwards, and I am living into the past. But this receptacle is too small for this to be a necessary deduction.'

The concept of entropy involves that the system in which entropy must increase is self-determined and therefore unknowable and non-existent. The Second Law of Thermodynamics therefore only applies accurately to the whole Universe and the probability it measures is really the degree of its inaccuracy.

It follows from a dialectical world-view that 'nothing is absolute and self-determined but the Universe itself. The complexity of men's conscious relations with the Universe may grow continuously, but they will never be co-incident with the Universe. Their very increase is the generation of new qualities which now form part of the unknown. Thus nothing is unknowable, because nothing is self-determined or unmediated, but absolute knowledge is unattainable. Every expression or vehicle of knowledge, every formulation of consciousness, is incomplete. It does not 'contain' an error, but its limited truth is determined by its limited error. The elimination of its error does not give us absolute truth: a new hypothesis is required synthesising them in an ampler statement. This can only come about if the error in the former hypothesis has been revealed in practice—if the contradiction implicit in it has become overt, and truth and error have flown asunder, generating a new truth. Man therefore learns by his mistakes. The discovery of an error is the discovery of a new truth, for, if the error is discoverable, the new truth is now knowable. This is the 'unity of truth and error', and it is not a 'mysticism' of dialectics, but is a description of a process common to the methodology of science and life.



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Are we therefore, as dialectical materialists, supporters of Vaihinger's '*Als Ob*'\* and the *value* of fictions? No, for to believe in the absolute value of error as an end is to be as limited as to believe in an absolute truth. In dialectics an error cannot be tolerated. The antagonism between truth and error is real. Once known, once this negation has revealed itself, the intolerableness of error prevents thought from resting upon it, and man moves on to a new truth. But according to Vaihinger, man is consciously content with error and rests on it. Thought loses its impetus. Vaihinger's view remains a metaphysical bourgeois doctrine. He is a positivist: his position is that reality is unknowable. Since entities are unknowable in themselves, everything that works is as true as it is possible for a thing to be true.

But dialectics, if it is to justify its programme, must explain the origin of this 'tired' bourgeois philosophy. It must leave no sphere self-determined. It must close the changing circle of being. Why has dualism wrecked bourgeois philosophy? Why was Platonism 'congealed' and not dialectical? Why is Marxism dialectical?

If no sphere is self-determined, ideology must be in a mutually determining relation with the society of which it is a product. They must fit each other, at every level, like hand and glove, like river and river bed, for philosophy is a social product. This arises from the very fact that we can talk about society. The private thoughts of an individual are inaccessible; the desires of a man to do something are invisible. But as soon as man's thoughts issue in language, in concepts, in a coherent system, they become social. They have adopted social forms: language and ideas, evolved by the process of society. Such a public system of thought is a social product. And as soon as man's desires to do something result in action, in the moulding of material into

\* *The Philosophy of 'As If'*. (Kegan Paul.)

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something socially recognised as having use and value, here too aim becomes end, desire becomes a social product. Thought and will are private and personal; a philosophy and a commodity are social products. Yet thought and will, though private, are determined by the philosophy and material products of the society into which a man is born. What I am taught and what I see round me, influence what I think about, and what I desire.

Thus thought is naturally dialectic in so far as it is part of the process of society. At each stage thought and material being are flung apart and return on each other, in mutual determinism, generating the new qualities of society. How then does thought become congealed? Bourgeois revolt gives rise to mechanical materialism. This in turn generates idealism. But these two opposites cannot be reconciled within the framework that produced them. All thought that remains within these two poles becomes non-dialectic. It becomes barren logic-chopping. The true synthesis is Marxism; but Marxism is revolutionary; it rests on a revolution of the class structure of society. *It is the class structure of society that is holding back the dialectical movement of thought.* The poverty of bourgeois philosophy is rooted in the breakdown of bourgeois economy. These outworn production relations are holding back the productive forces of society, holding back not merely the full produce of idle factory plants, derelict coffee plantations, unploughed fields and unemployed men, but of human brains.

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We know the bourgeois illusion to be a reflex of the class structure of bourgeois society. The first stage is the bourgeois revolt: 'I am free in so far as I throw off all social restraint.' Man, by the insurgent exercise of his desires, can dominate his environment, not as master dominates slave—such

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relations are banned—not by a simple fiat of his will—but as an owner dominates his property, as a craftsman dominates his tool, a farmer his land—by knowing its laws. *The bourgeois sees the environment as his tool in the first stage of the bourgeois development.*

The first dialectic movement of the revolutionary bourgeoisie gives rise to Elizabethan tragedy, to the exploration of the world, to Spanish and Tudor monarchy, to Galileo, to the splendid conation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, finally to Newtonism and Cartesianism. The discovery of the 'law of gravity', of analytical geometry, of the farthest limits of the world, marks the crescendo of the bourgeois explosion into the environment. The bourgeois has now seized the environment as tool. The mechanical materialistic philosophy of Hobbes, Condillac, D'Holbach, and the like expresses the limit of the vast social movement which has already, in reaching the limit, clearly revealed its opposite. This is the apogee (1750) of the first stage of capitalism.

For from the environment, dominated as a tool in the extraverted, exploring period of social relations, we now pass to the bourgeois himself in the introverted analytical period. All the bourgeois acts of will at first flow into the environment, and are there realised. This is not in his opinion a determining relation, for the bourgeois is, by his initial revolution, free in himself. Because therefore this is not a mutually determining relation, because he knows as it were by simple inspection, he has no two-way connexion with his environment. *He has no guarantee that the environment known by him has an independent existence. If it determined his knowing, even as his knowing determined it, this would perforce constitute independent existence on its part.* But the bourgeois denies this! Hence Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Comte, and neo-positivism. In this second stage of

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bourgeois economy we have the birth of idealism. The environment either does not exist, or is unknowable. Mind is primary.

This development is the result of industrial capitalism, of the terrific power over its environment manifested by the machine. This makes it seem as if the mind is everything, and the environment nothing. It makes mind seem the sole active force generating all quality.

Society can only seem to be the success of individual will, in an economy in which men act as if their sole actions are undetermined and primary. The bourgeois producing for the market, free from all social control and restraint, believes that in doing what seems most to fulfil his will to profit, he is free. The market, the regulator of bourgeois economy, stands to him as environment, and shields him from reality.

In fact his actions are determined by the market and the market itself is determined by the completely blind actions of thousands of men like himself, but the law of its determinism is unknown to him. There is no control, no awareness of the relations between individual producers which determine slump and boom. Hence the bourgeois regards the success of society in changing the environment, not as the outcome of social laws, but as the outcome of free individual mind, as the success of personal conation. When he is sufficiently insulated from the environment by the development of his class, this becomes idealism.

Such an idealistic philosophy is necessarily the philosophy of a ruling class, with whom the environment seems to obey their free will as will. The proletariat cannot generate such a philosophy because this same capitalist economy exploits them. It forces them to bring their labour power into the market to see to the best bidder or go empty away if there is none. Its anarchy makes them unfree. It does not fulfil their wills, it exploits them.

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The proletariat has a remedy, that of social organisation. By combining into trade unions, and accepting social constraints, not haphazard but to a conscious end—higher wages, better conditions—the workers secure the fulfilment of their wills. And in the factories where they work, their organisation is what gives labour its productivity.

Thus the proletariat, generated by the exploitation of bourgeois economy, cannot accept any philosophy that sees freedom in lack of social organisation and constraint; the path of freedom, the road of fulfilment or desire. On the contrary, the only way they can realise their wills is by establishing, in bitter fight, the organisations and social restraints (Factory Acts, Right to Strike, etc.) which the bourgeois rejected. Thus the operation of bourgeois economy generates its negation in its exploited class.

But this negation is not a return to medieval philosophy, which bourgeois philosophy itself negated. Medieval social restraints were unconscious; their organisations were not planned to secure an end; they were rigid, inflexible, imposed from above. They did not represent mass co-operation but lord-and-slave domination. They were the product of a class society.

Thus the philosophy enforced on one by being a member of the proletariat, is higher than either feudal or bourgeois philosophy. It is nearer to reality; it includes them both. It includes the organisation embodied consciously in feudal society, but it does not permit these organisations to arise as expressions of the privilege of a ruling class. They arise from the needs of the co-operative task, just as to lift a huge rock necessitates co-operative action by a gang of men and this action is not imposed by a lord's will, but by the shape and weight of the stone and the nature of the tools available.

In Hegelianism the Idea becomes absolute, objective, and creates the whole world. This is the climax of bourgeois

philosophy. Concurrently bourgeois economy is reaching its apex.

Up till then there had been no dualism in bourgeois philosophy, only the dialectic *yea* and *nay* of thought generating greater complexity and subtlety. Up till then there had been no strife between bourgeois social relations and productive forces, only a tension generating still greater fertility. But now this becomes dualism.

Formal logic is not a law of thought, it is a rule of symbolism. If we are to denote social references by social referents, if we are to indicate for social purposes socially interesting events in the flux of becoming by discrete, permanent symbols, there is one elementary necessity:

Each discrete permanent symbol must denote an entity on which our actions will converge.

For example if by 'this rock' we sometimes mean a tree, sometimes a cloud, there will be no social convergence. But a language is designed to secure social convergence. Hence 'this rock' must always secure social convergence.

This involves the so-called 'Laws of Thought'. The Law of Contradiction, 'a thing cannot both be A and Not-A,' secures unidirection in social convergence. The Law of the Excluded Middle, 'a thing must be either A or Not-A,' secures unanimity in social convergence.

Logical laws are therefore social. They are approximate rules which must be obeyed if language is to fulfil a social function. They are in no way true of the nature of reality. They do not in fact make any statement about the nature of reality. They merely make the following statement:

'It is desirable to ensure co-operation in the active relation of society to reality.'

Of course this is tautologous, inasmuch as the existence of a language implies not merely the recognition of this law, but the fact that, even before language came into being,

there must have been social co-operation to bring it into being. That is why logic is a late outgrowth from language.

Formal logic does not express the vital nature of reality, but expresses certain abstract characteristics of social action. Its laws are manifestly untrue as statements of reality. It is not true that a thing is either A or not A. Yesterday it was A; to-day it is not-A. It is not true that a thing cannot both be and not be A. To-day I am alive, some day I will be dead. To-morrow I will or will not be dead. Both alternatives are equally true. The use of the verb 'is' gives a spurious truth to the methodological rules of logic: it implies a universal instant; but this we know from relativity physics to be impossible. There is only a social instant. There is a 'present' common to members of society existing and moving at roughly the same speed and in the same place in the Universe and able therefore to undertake a co-operative task. Outside this society, the 'is' becomes a 'was' or 'will-be', and the 'laws' of logic cease to be valid. Even within society logic is only approximately true. It is a rough 'working' rule like the absolute Time and Space of conversation and appointment-making which is also an unreal social approximation.

Social tasks show us change in reality. Our symbols must be continually altered; our thoughts and forms continually become qualified and enriched. Our active contact with reality ensures a continual dialectical change in thought and perception, and the constant ingression of the new as the result of our changing relations with it. Thought therefore needs only to go out in action to remain dialectical; hence the dialectical nature of scientific hypotheses. The hypothesis goes out in the experiment and, as a 'result', becomes changed, and returns upon the hypothesis to alter it. The fresh hypothesis now gives rise to a fresh experiment. The experiment, if it negates the hypothesis, produces a new one,

competent to synthesise both the negation and the original hypothesis.

Whenever we see thought becoming non-dialectical and logical, there must be a breach between thought and action.

Instead of preoccupying itself with the changing subject-object relation, mind preoccupies itself with the forms of that symbolism which, in the past, has contained old dialectical formulations of realities. This indicates a similar process in society itself. The productive relations of society have become separated and antagonistic from the productive forces. The ruling class, the class whose philosophy language expresses, has ceased to be fertile, and has withdrawn and become merely parasitic. Thought has become introverted. We see this emphasis on logic, formalism, and withdrawal from action in the Hellenistic, Scholastic, and modern bourgeois philosophies. We see it in all developed philosophies, for the towering of philosophy as queen of thought is itself the reflection of a class cleavage. The development of logistic in contemporary thought is, like neo-realism, a good example of this trend. Logistic is a pre-occupation not with the use of mathematics but with the nature of its symbolism. As a result logistic has not generated a single new development in mathematical thought.

Dialectics is not therefore—as the Scholastics imagined formal logic to be—a machine for extracting the nature of reality from thought. It is the denial of the possibility of the existence of such a machine. It is a recognition of mutually determining relations between knowing and being. It is a creed of action, a constant goad forcing the thinker into reality. Thought is knowing; the experience is being, and at each new step new experience negates old thought. Yet their tension causes an advance to a new hypothesis more inclusive than the old. When capitalism has generated at one pole, the exploited proletariat, with unprecedented misery,



and at the other end, the exploiting bourgeoisie, with unprecedented wealth, a new quality emerges from their antagonism, that of Communism. A synthesis of the contradictions of bourgeois economy having come into being, these contradictions are now revealed nakedly as truth and error. Bourgeois philosophy now becomes sterile dualism, and it is proletarian philosophy or Marxism which is dialectic. But because it is the task of the proletariat, arising from the mode of their generation, to solve the problem of human relations and of the gulf between knowing and being, Marxism is more than a philosophy, it is a sociology. It is a theory of the concrete society in which philosophy, and other forms of ideology, are generated.

Bourgeois philosophy, therefore, can generate no greater philosophy than Hegel's, any more than feudalism could generate anything higher than Thomism or Hellenism anything more all-embracing than Platonism and Aristotelianism. To rise beyond Hegel's idealistic synthesis, one must see that the mind in its turn is determined by social relations, that knowing is a mutually determining relation between subject and object, that freedom is not accident but the consciousness of necessity. One must see that if freedom for a man in society is the attainment of individual desires, it involves conscious co-operation with others to obtain them, and that this conscious co-operation will itself transform a man's desires. To see this is to cease to be a bourgeois, and to cease to tolerate bourgeois economy. One is already a communist revolutionary. Bourgeois economy itself produces these, for to be shown that freedom does *not* lie in lack of social organisation is to be proletarianised. It is to be declassed, if one is a bourgeois or to be made class-conscious if one is a proletarian. It is to find how helpless one is by oneself to resist the dominating and exploiting relations that are concealed in bourgeois economy.

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To have become a dialectical materialist is to have been subject to exploitation, want, war, anxiety, insecurity; to have had one's barest human needs denied or one's loved ones tormented or killed in the name of bourgeois liberty, and to have found that one's 'free-will' alone can do nothing at all, because one is more bound and crippled in bourgeois economy than a prisoner in a dungeon—and to have found that in this condition the only thing that can secure alleviation is co-operation with one's fellow men in the same dungeon, the world's exploited proletariat. This co-operation itself imposes on one's actions laws deriving from the nature of society and of the aims one has in common with those others. Then one has ceased to be a bourgeois philosopher: one has become a dialectical materialist. One has seen how men can leave the realm of necessity for that of freedom, not by becoming blind to necessity, or by denying its existence, but by becoming conscious of it.







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